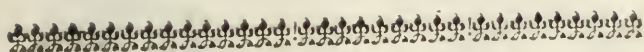




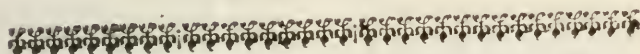
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INTO THE
I D E A S
O F
SPACE, TIME, IMMENSITY,
and ETERNITY, &c.

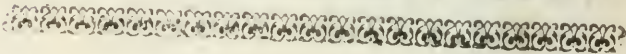


E R R A T A in the ENQUIRY.

Pag. 37. *read* as well as. p. 96. *line ult. add* p. 32. p. 101. l. 19. *r. Unit.*
p. 129. l. 13. *dele* such.

E R R A T A in the DISSERTATION.

Pag. 9. line 18. *Part, r. Parts.* p. 19. l. 1. *dele in.* *ibid.* Not. l. 12. 8. *r.*
9^{vo}. *ibid.* l. ult. 3. *r. 33.* p. 21. l. 13. 1614. *r. 1600.* p. 21. l. 1. *can, r.*
cannot. p. 26. l. 27. *miscalling, r. calling.* p. 45. Not. l. 3. *intrinseca, r.*
intrinsece. *ibid.* l. 6. *cognosceatur, r. cognoscatur.* p. 36. Not. l. 8. *intrin-*
seca, r. intrinsece. *ibid.* l. 10. *accedit, r. accidit.* p. 37. Not. l. 3. *adducta,*
r. adducte. p. 38. Not. l. 17. *ei, r. ex.* p. 56. l. 15. *fresh, r. such.* p. 77.
l. 25. *pia, r. pie.* p. 93. l. 23. *spoken, r. ipoken of.* p. 98. l. 8. *before an,*
r. implying.



A N
E N Q U I R Y
I N T O T H E
I D E A S
O F

SPACE, TIME, IMMENSITY,
and ETERNITY;

As also the
SELF-EXISTENCE, NECESSARY
EXISTENCE, and UNITY of the
DIVINE NATURE:

In ANSWER to a Book lately Publish'd by

Mr. J A C K S O N,

ENTITLED,

*The Existence and Unity of God proved from
his Nature and Attributes.*

By EDMUND LAW, M. A.
FELLOW of Christ-College in CAMBRIDGE.

To which is added,

A DISSERTATION upon the Argument
a Priori for proving the EXISTENCE of a FIRST
CAUSE. By a Learned Hand.

C A M B R I D G E :

Printed by W. FENNER and R. BERESFORD, for W. THURLBOURN;
and Sold by Mess. KNAPTON, INNYS and MANBY, C. RIVING-
TON, S. BIRT, London; and S. HARDING, in St. Martin's-Lane,
Westminster. MDCCLXXXIV.

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E N Q U I R Y

Into our IDEAS of

SPACE, TIME, IMMENSITY and ETERNITY, &c.



THE Ideas of *Space* and *Time*, and their *Infinity*, or the Ideas of *Immensity* and *Eternity*, being made the Foundation of that which Dr. *Clarke* was pleas'd to call an Argument *a priori*, in his Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God; and what he was always obliged to have recourse to, as explanatory of his Notion of *absolute Necessity*, in the several Uses he was to make of it; viz. whether as antecedently forcing itself upon us, i. e. antecedently to our Supposition of the Existence of any thing; or as an antecedent Cause, Ground or Reason of the Existence, or as a Mode of the Existence, or lastly as a Cause

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sine qua non of the Existence, of every thing : These being, I say, the last Resort on all Occasions, and absolutely necessary in the Doctor's Scheme ; Mr. *Jackson* likewise allowing them and the Arguments deduced from them to be of the greatest Importance in the present Controversy ; * I think it the most natural Method to begin with settling and explaining these several Ideas, with examining what they are and how acquired ; which seems to be the only sure way to discover what they will infer, and of what Force all Arguments can be which are deduced from them.

AFTER this I shall consider what Mr. *Jackson* has any where objected either concerning the Nature and Qualities of these Ideas, or our manner of acquiring them ; as well as the direct Arguments which he has offer'd in Support of his own way of conceiving them.

IN the next Place I will propose some more Arguments against his Notions of *Space*, *Time*, *Immensity* and *Eternity*.

AND lastly, I intend to examine the several Consequences which he has drawn from them, with regard to the *Necessary Existence*, *Infinity*, and *Unity* of God.

* *Existence and Unity*, p. 43.

C H A P. I.

Of SPACE.

IN the first Place, with regard to the Idea of Space, 'tis confess'd that Men have some kind of Notions of it, otherwise there would never have been so many tedious Disputes about it : But then again these Notions have been so various and inconsistent, so roving and indeterminate, that from the very first Dawn of Philosophy to the present Time scarce two Authors of Note have entertain'd precisely the same Opinion concerning it. Some have been induced to think it a Substance, others a Property, others some middle thing between Substance and Property. It has been term'd a Mode of Existence, a Relation, a mere Possibility, Ponibility, &c. Some again have supposed it to be eternal, independent, infinite ; others created, dependent, finite. Some have made it the very Substance of the Deity, others one of his Attributes ; others an Attribute both of the divine Substance and Attributes ; and others have gone so far as to conceive of it as of some Organ of the Deity, or as it were his *Sensorium*. Some make it the same with solid Matter ; some suppose it to arise from the Absence of Matter, or to be mere Vacuity. Lastly, some imagine it to comprehend the Essences, and to be necessary to the Existence of all things whatsoever, and others contend that it is absolutely nothing.

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Now the first Observation, which an indifferent Person would make concerning that remarkable variety of Sentiments upon the Subject before us, seems to be this, *viz.* That it can hardly be any fix'd, determinate Object in Nature, which suggests so many inconsistent Notions of itself ; but rather one of the *Entia Rationis*, or an Ideal Image arbitrarily set up in the Mind, and that accordingly there may be as different Notions of it in the World, as there are different ways of forming or acquiring it. This, I say, seems to be the most obvious Thought on the first view of the Subject ; but whether this be right or no, may need some farther Enquiry.

THE Author of the Notes to A.Bp. *King* proposed a way of settling this Debate by examining the Nature and Properties of our abstract Ideas, in order to see whether Space, Duration, Immen- sity and Eternity were to be reckoned in that Class. Upon Enquiry it appear'd, that these had the same Properties with some other abstract Ideas, confess- edly such ; and might originally have been form'd in the same manner, tho' Custom has made them so familiar to us, that we may easily mistake them for natural. Of this I think no notice has been taken, except two or three superficial Glances, intimating that there is something more in *them* than in *some other* abstract Ideas, without directly affirming or denying that they are such ; nor has the Account of abstract Ideas there given been ei- ther confuted, or attempted to be reconciled to the other Hypothesis.

As to *Space*, in particular, the Author of the Notes began with proposing three several Notions of it, all of them maintain'd by considerable Wri- ters ; *viz.* That it was either the mere Absence of Body ; or its Extension in the Abstract ; or an ima- ginary Substratum join'd to the general Idea of

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Extension : on any of which Suppositions he shew'd it to be nothing real *ad extra*, nothing more than an Idea or Conception of the Mind (which was indeed pretty evident from that very diversity of Opinions concerning it, as observ'd above) and consequently that it could infer nothing more than a Power in us of framing such Ideas : However, that on some of the foregoing Suppositions it could not be endowed with any positive *Property*, on all of them it was incapable of that positive *Infinity* which had been ascribed to it by Dr. *Clarke* and his Followers. This was then judg'd sufficient to overthrow all the Arguments built on the real Existence of Space. To this several Objections have been made, and some new Arguments invented to support the contrary Opinion, all which are judiciously collected and well urged by Mr. *Jackson* in the Book before us, and shall be consider'd in their Order.

HE begins this Subject with the following Proposition, which he takes to be an evident Truth, ^a *Whatsoever is possible in Idea, is possible in itself.*

I AM sorry to find that we are obliged to differ from this celebrated Writer, not only in the Subjects of Space and Time, but in the first Principles and Foundation of Knowledge, nay in our very Notion of *Knowledge* itself. He seems, by his following Arguments, to place it in a connection between Ideas and certain Ideata, or real Existences ; we, with Mr. *Locke*, must place it in perceiving a connection between our Ideas themselves, and can carry it but a little way into real Existence.^b We are forced to suppose that many things may be in

^a *Existence and Unity*, p. 43.

^b See *Locke* on Human Understanding, Book IV. Ch. vii. §. 7, &c.

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their own Natures impossible, which, for want of knowing the whole of their respective Natures, we may conceive to be possible, and *vice versa* : Which, as we apprehend, must unavoidably be the Case, except our Conceptions were an adequate measure of Things, and could reach all the Possibilities and Impossibilities in Nature.

'Tis granted, that where we have a clear intuitive Perception of the Agreement or Disagreement of two or more Ideas, there we have all the Evidence our Natures are capable of, and may be certain that these Ideas do really agree or disagree ; thus we come at all our general Knowledge ; this is our only Criterion of Truth and Certainty : But then this Knowledge, Truth, and Certainty, reaches no farther than these Ideas themselves, and their Relation to each other. It does indeed assure us, that if there are such things as our Ideas represent, they must be likewise so related, and the same Consequences will follow in Fact, that do in Theory : But it does not in like manner inform us that there really are or may be external things correspondent to such our Ideas ; this can only be known from *Fact* and Experience, from their either being now, or having once been, immediately presented to us. To prove therefore either the actual or possible^c Existence of Things from the Conceptions which we have of them in our Minds, is, in my Opinion, setting up a false Standard of Truth ; and this Author's Consequence will not hold good, *viz.* that " That cannot be necessary *in se*, by virtue of any unknown Properties, which I can conceive possible not to be : " ^c If by conceiving he means only *imagining* ; in which Sense he must use that Word when he comes to apply it to the Existence of Space and Time.

^c *Existence and Unity*, p. 44.



NEITHER do the Instances, which he brings to establish this, come up to the point; *viz.* That we cannot conceive twice two not to be equal to four; or the Properties of a Square to be those of a Triangle or Globe.^d For here is a Connection between Idea and Idea. Twice two will be equal to four, or else it will be more or less than twice two, *i. e.* not twice two; which is a clear Contradiction. But is there the like Connection between ideal and real Existence? Is Existence *ad extra* as clearly implied in the Idea of Space, as four is implied in the Idea of twice two? Can I be as sure of the Existence of a Triangle, as I am of some of its Properties, *viz.* that its three Angles are equal to two right ones? Or do I as plainly perceive that there is a perfect Square or Globe in Nature, as that a Square is not a Globe?

HE adds, “ The Fallacy we put upon ourselves, I “ imagine to be in this, that being totally ignorant “ of many things, and using ourselves to talk of “ Words without distinctly knowing or considering “ the Ideas which belong to them, or even fixing any “ to them, we think that we can conceive things “ *to be*, or *not to be*, as we please, and so that we “ can conceive any Truth to be false, or any False- “ hood to be true, till it is actually proved to us “ to be the one or the other; as if a Truth or “ Falshood was different when known, from what “ it is when unknown.”^e I answer, it is very different with regard *to us*. In the former case our Conceptions are necessarily determined to one side; in the latter they are undetermined, and may be of either. And tho’ we cannot in general conceive things to be or not to be, *as we please*, (of which

^d Ibid. p. 45.

• Ibid.

Ch. I.  more hereafter) yet we may imagine things, things whereof we have distinct Ideas, and which we do consider, to be very different from what they really are, till we have got *adequate* Ideas of them, and can clearly discover all their Relations. We may, as he has it in the next Page, conceive that which is an absolute Contradiction to be true, so long as we are not apprized of all the Circumstances, or do not perceive the Repugnancy of the several Ideas which we have of it, *i. e.* until we see that it is a Contradiction. Instances of this are frequent in all Arts and Sciences.

HE subjoins,^f “ We cannot indeed always determine concerning necessary Truths and Falshoods, “ because of our Ignorance of so many of them ; but “ to say that we can conceive things to be otherwise “ than they *necessarily* are, is to determine that they “ *may* be otherwise, which is a Contradiction.” I reply, We cannot indeed conceive them to be only *possible*, when we do clearly perceive them to be *necessary* ; we cannot believe them to be what they are not, when we actually know what they are : But while we want this clear Perception or Knowledge, we may, as was said before, suppose them to be very different from what they are in their own Natures ; we may believe that to be necessary, which is barely possible, or contingent ; and that to be possible, which is absolutely impossible ; and therefore, ’till we have a clear Perception of the thing, we ought to *determine* nothing about it. A Man that neither understood Letters, nor had any Idea of Painting, would judge it impossible to make Sounds visible, or to represent a spherical Body on a plain Surface. ^g An Algebraist perceives that multiply-

^f Ibid. p. 45.

^g See *Philos. Transact.* N^o 402. p. 442.

ing Negatives into Negatives will produce an Affirmative; one that is ignorant of that Science will be apt to conceive the direct contrary. Many that know what a Cube is, will be inclined to think it a Contradiction for one Cube to perforate or be let through another of equal Dimensions; which yet is demonstrably true, and has been done in fact. Our Conceptions therefore ought not immediately to stand for the Measure of all Possibles, &c. And I should rather imagine the great Fallacy to be in this, that we too often mistake our Conceptions for the things themselves, and too hastily put an *Imagination* for *intuitive* Knowledge: And on this Fallacy, I think, is built, among others, the Author's following Corollary,^h "That if we *clearly* "*perceive* and understand that there is *one* necessarily existent Being, and can also conceive that "no more than one such *may* exist, it follows "thence that there *is but one* necessarily existent "Being; because it is before already proved, that "we cannot conceive any thing not to be, whose "Existence is necessary." To make which conclusive, he should have put *clearly perceive and understand* in both parts of the first Proposition; and at last, instead of *whose Existence is necessary*, he should have said, whose Existence is *perceived to be* necessary. This would have been very true, tho' not to his purpose. But as it is, the whole turns on the promiscuous Use of the Words *conceive* and *perceive*; it confounds Imagination with Knowledge, as abovesaid; and takes for granted that whatever we conceive, in the former Sense of that Word, is therefore real *ad extra*. Whether this be an *evident Truth*, or any Truth at all, we submit to the Judgment of the Reader.

^h *Existence and Unity*, p. 46.

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I MUST beg leave here to take notice once more of the Quibble in these Words *possible, necessary, contingent, &c.*ⁱ which seems to run thro' all this Author's Reasoning. Possibility then is twofold, *relative* and *absolute*; a supposable Possibility, or a Possibility *in us* to conceive any thing to be, the Existence of which implies no Contradiction to our Ideas; and a *real* Possibility in Nature, or a certain *Power* of bringing that thing into Existence: Which two are very different, and the latter does by no means follow from the former. The Reality of a *Power*, or an actual efficient Cause requisite to produce any thing, cannot be proved barely from the Existence of this thing being *possible* in the first Sense, or its implying no Contradiction to our Ideas that this thing should exist: And therefore the Consequence so often drawn from Possibility *in Idea*, or *quoad nos*, to Possibility *in se*, or *in rerum natura*, will never hold. The same may be observed of *Necessity, Contingency, &c.*^k

THIS Author's second Proposition, relating to the Proof of a God from our *Idea* of one,^l shall be more fully consider'd in another Place. To proceed,

'TIS granted farther, That an immediate Perception from without, implies the real Existence of something external, *i. e.* some Cause, Ground, or Occasion of it: (tho' that Occasion very often bears no kind of Resemblance to it^m) But then

ⁱ *Existence and Unity*, p. 45.

^k See this at large in *Collier's Impartial Inquiry*, p. 173, 174, and p. 177, 178, &c. Conf. Note 11. to *King*, p. 54, &c. second Edition.

^l *Existence and Unity*, p. 46, 47.

^m See *Locke on Human Understanding*, Book II. cap. viii. §. 2.



this Evidence reaches no farther than that immediate Perception ; it holds no longer than whilst the Mind is passive in receiving the Impression : As soon as ever it begins to reflect and operate on this Perception, to alter, enlarge, and modify it anew, it then becomes properly the Work and Fiction of the Mind, and, as there view'd, neither has, nor ever had, any proper Archetype or objective Reality.

THIS is the Case of all our abstract Ideas ; and thus in the Instance before us. The Idea of Space, if taken from a Portion of real Extension, it has so far an external Ideatum as that Extension reaches ; we are sure of an objective Reality so far as our Senses inform us concerning real Extension, or rather extended things ; and may conceive our Idea of Extension to have a *possible* Archetype so long as ever we can enlarge it in our Mind : But that Archetype will then only be an imaginary one, not founded in the nature of things, tho' we may become inur'd to it by degrees, till we cannot get it out of our Heads again : Custom may render it so familiar to us, that we shall at length mistake this Imagination for an Appearance of Nature ; and, like that too, it will *force* itself upon us whether we will or no. Nay, we may carry it beyond Nature, and form an Imagination which neither has, nor had, nor ever can have, an objective Reality. We may set up an Idea, which *Reason* (or other Ideas) will shew us to be an absurd one, or inconsistent with the nature of things. And this I take to be the Case, when we strive to enlarge this same Idea of Extension to *absolute Infinity*, and suppose it already so great, that it is not capable of being made any greater, or what we call Space actually infinite : Whereas every thing *actually infinite*, or such Infinity as may be applied to real Existence, is confessedly *incapable* of

Ch. I. any Increase ; and that which consists of *Parts*, as all Extension is likewise acknowledged to do (nay, which is the very Meaning of the Word Extension, as is well observed by the ingenious Author of *Dr. Clarke's Notion of Space examined*ⁿ) must evidently admit of a *perpetual Increase* : Which is an express Contradiction.

THE same has happen'd in our Ideas of *Duration*, and of the *Divisibility* of *Matter*, and likewise of *Number*, for the very same Reason, since Number is the Measure of all the others ; and, properly speaking, 'tis not their Infinity, but that of Number only, which the Mind contemplates when ascribed to these, or any other kinds of *Quantity*, as Mr. *Locke* observes^o. That great Master of Reasoning thought^p “ it would be hard to find any
 “ one so absurd as to say he has the positive Idea
 “ of an actual infinite Number, the Infinity whereof
 “ lies only in a Power still of adding any Combi-
 “ nation of Units to any former Number, and that
 “ as long and as much as one will ; the like also
 “ being in the Infinity of Space and Duration, which
 “ Power leaves always to the Mind room for end-
 “ less Additions : Yet (adds he) there be those
 “ who imagine they have *positive* Ideas of *infinite*
 “ Duration and and Space. It would, I think, be
 “ enough to destroy any such positive Idea of In-
 “ finite, to ask him that has it, whether he could
 “ add to it or no.”

THUS far Mr. *Locke* ; who, were he now alive, would find himself mistaken in his first Conjecture. He might easily meet with those who maintain the positive Infinity of *Number*, among their other In-

ⁿ Pag. 126.

^o Book II. chap. xvi. §. 8. and chap. xvii. §. 10.

^p Chap. xvii. §. 13.



finites; and indeed they have equal Reason for it, as was observed above.

Mr. *Jackson* declares peremptorily, that “it is a great Error-----to think there is *no Number*, or *no Space* or *Duration* so great but a greater may be conceived. These are,” continues he, “in their nature actually and positively *infinite*, incapable even in Idea of *Increaseableness*; which shews-----that the Infinity of them is an *absolute*, *positive* and perfect Infinity, or that to which no-thing can be added.”^a

A Number infinite! A Space and Duration incapable of Increase, *even in Idea!* What can be said to one who really conceives the Possibility of all this? For my own part, I must despair of ever conceiving it, or of convincing those that think they do; and can only desire all such seriously to peruse the latter part of Mr. *Locke*’s Chapter of Infinity^r; and with regard to an *infinite Number* in particular, I must, with that excellent Author, think it enough to destroy any such positive Idea, to ask him that has it a short Question of the same kind, *viz.* Whether this infinite Number be *Even* or *Odd*?

If Mr. *Jackson* means here that Number in general, or what the Schools call *Numerus numerans*, is incapable of Increase (which his Words will by no means bear) this indeed is so far true, that if we suppose it positively infinite, we cannot conceive it to be any larger; but then ’tis manifestly beg-

^a *Existence and Unity*, p. 87.

^r “To have actually in the Mind the Idea of a Space infinite, is to suppose the Mind already pass’d over, and actually to have a view of all those repeated Ideas of Space, which an endless Repetition can never totally represent to it; which carries in it a plain contradiction. *Locke on Human Understanding*, Book II. Chap. xvii. §. 7.

Ch. I.
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ging the Question, and taking it for granted that there can be any such Infinite in a Thing the very Nature and Essence whereof demonstrates the contrary ^f.

BUT to return to the Idea of Space. The Author of the Notes to A. Bp. King [†] mention'd this among some other abstract Ideas, and endeavour'd to shew how he might possibly acquire it, *viz.* by taking the property of Extension separate from all particular extended things, and thereby rendering it *general*, and then by the Addition of an unknown *Substratum*, making it become *independent*, and applying it as a common *Measure* for all particular things, as well as a *Receptacle* to contain them. An eminent Writer, to whom whom we are obliged for this account, and whom Mr. Jackson is not unacquainted with, explains it in the following manner.

‘ A MAN having got the Idea of a Room, distinguish'd into several Parts, Ranges and Classes, and filled with variety of Things, lodges the Idea in his Memory, and can by the help of Imagination revive the Idea when he pleases, and conceive it as distinctly, only more faintly, as if the Things were before his Eyes. He can conceive the several Things removed out and in, or imagine them differently placed, or ranged with great variety, while the Room itself continues fix'd and immutable, independent of the Things contain'd in it, and unconcerned in their Motions. Now take but away the Idea of Solidity, and retain the Idea of the Distances, Range, and Order of the Things in the Room, and then a-

^f See *Colliber's Impartial Enquiry*, Book II. chap. ii. Or *Sherlock* on the Trinity, p. 77.

[†] V. I. p. 6. Ild Edit.

‘ rises the Idea of *Space* containing the Things in
 ‘ the same Order as the *material* Room before.
 ‘ Thus the Idea is transfer’d from *real* to *imagi-*
 ‘ *nary* Place, by a Fiction of the Mind, of great
 ‘ use for conceiving and retaining the distinct Or-
 ‘ der of Things: And there’s no more Difficulty
 ‘ in imagining this, than there is in my imagining
 ‘ the Paper whereon I write to be annihilated, and
 ‘ yet the Letters drawn on it to keep the same
 ‘ Order and Distances as before. Thus the Idea
 ‘ of *real Locality* is transfer’d to an imaginary Sub-
 ‘ ject, and the Ideas of *Continuing*, *Fixedness*, and
 ‘ *Independency* go along with it. And because it
 ‘ is apply’d to all Existences, in the same manner
 ‘ as the other is to some, therefore it is conceiv’d
 ‘ absolutely independent of any thing: And there’s
 ‘ no more Mystery in it, than in my conceiving the
 ‘ Classes and Shelves of my Study to be independ-
 ‘ ent of the Books they contain; to be antecedent
 ‘ in conception to the placing of the Books, and
 ‘ to continue if the Books be removed. All the
 ‘ Difference is, that the Classes and Shelves in
 ‘ Space are purely *imaginary*, which serve as well
 ‘ as *real*, for fixing the Order of Things in the
 ‘ Mind, and the Books contained are the Books
 ‘ of Nature, if I may so speak, all Substances what-
 ‘ ever. Use and Custom fixes this Idea in our
 ‘ Minds till it grows in a manner natural to us,
 ‘ and it serves to all the intents and purposes of
 ‘ Speech, as well as if there were something more
 ‘ than *mere Fiction* in it.

‘ T H U S Space, which, as a *common Measure*,
 ‘ is conceiv’d capable of being enlarged to Infinity,
 ‘ is, as a *common Receptacle*, conceiv’d to have
 ‘ that Infinity *independently*, *necessarily* and *unal-*
 ‘ *terably*. And to this it is owing that we not
 ‘ only conceive that it *may be* infinite, but that it
 ‘ *must* be so too, inasmuch as it is conceiv’d, in
 ‘ the

Ch. I. ' the whole and in every Part, antecedently in-
 dependent on any thing."

THUS far this judicious Writer : To whose Account I shall take the liberty to add that of Dr. Watts . v " Sometimes the Soul dwelling in " animal Nature, and under the power of Imagina- " tion, mistakes a *substantial Being* for mere No- " thing, and sometimes it mistakes *Nothing* for a " *substantial Being* : And indeed this is the very " first way whereby Men gain the Idea of *Space*.— " We see a Room which is full of Light and Air, " which are real *Bodies* or *Substances*, and we ima- " gine there is *nothing* in it, and then we call this " nothing *void*, or *empty Space*, and fancy this " empty *Space* to be broad, and long, and deep, " to reach from Wall to Wall, and from the Floor " to the Ceiling : Thence comes our first Concep- " tion of *Space*, with its Properties of Length, " Breadth and Depth ; and thus it is usher'd into " our Minds at first by a gross Mistake of Light " and Air, which are *something*, for meer *nothing*. " Then our Imagination changes the Scene, and " turns this *nothing* into *something* again, by leav- " ing out the Idea of *void* or *emptiness*, giving it a " positive Name, and calling it *Space*."

This excellent Author has a good many Obser- vations which make the foregoing Account more than probable, to which I refer the Reader ; and shall only beg leave to observe here, that whether any of these Accounts suit exactly with the Ideas which *all* Men have of Space, and fully describe the manner of their acquiring them, or not ; whether Men first get their Idea of it from a full Room or one imagin'd to be empty ; from perceiving the absence of solid Matter, and *feeling* the difference

v Philosophical Essays, p. 24.



between Resistance and No-resistance; or from the Extension of material Things abstracted from its proper Subjects, and enlarged in the Mind: Whether they acquire it from Sight or Touch, or join the report of both Senses together: Whether they add a Substratum to it, or no: In which soever of these ways, I say, the generality of Mankind acquire this Idea, (as in truth they have many ways of coming at such Notions as are of their own collecting) or whether or no we could shew any way of their acquiring it, it would still be indifferent to the main Dispute about the reality of its Object. We put the Asserters of such a reality on proving some Existence correspondent to the generally received Ideas of *Space*, which they can never do, so long as these Ideas may possibly be acquired in any of the several Methods assigned: And we make no farther Use of these or the like Accounts, than to shew that there's no absolute Necessity for ascribing this so various an Idea to Nature, or admitting all the Consequences drawn from thence.

HOWEVER we shall proceed to consider the several Arguments or Insinuations which Mr. *Jackson* has any where dropp'd against the foregoing Accounts.

AND first of our *making* the Idea of Space. *
 " That which hath given the Author of the Notes,
 " and other thinking Persons, a wrong Notion
 " of this Matter is, that because they get the
 " Ideas of Time and Space, Eternity and Immen-
 " sity, from outward, visible, and material Beings,
 " form them by Degrees, and abstract them from
 " thence in their Minds, they are apt to think
 " them to be mere abstract Ideas of *their own mak-*

* *Existence and Unity*, p. 51.

Ch. I. *ing*, and to refer them only to these outward
 “ things. But this is plainly a Mistake. For the
 “ Ideas of Time and Space are quite different
 “ from the Idea of any visible or material Be-
 “ ings.”

ANSWER. We do not suppose these Ideas to be *wholly* of our own making, but to have an original Foundation in some outward Things, and afterwards to be carry'd on beyond those Things which at first occasion'd them, and referred to every Thing in Nature, to a great many Things to which they neither do, nor can bear any natural Relation.

THE Idea of Space, in particular, may have taken its first Rise from real Length, Breadth and Depth, or from Extension, a Property of material Beings; it may be grounded on some real Substance, Mode or Property, as all abstract Ideas are; but when it is once separated from the Substance or Properties with which it was join'd in Nature, it then becomes a mere *Ens rationis* or *abstract* Idea, and *so far* 'tis of our own making, and we may, if we please, refer it to Spirits, of which it is not a Property, and call them long, broad, and deep. By this means indeed it will become *quite different*, as he says, from the Idea of any visible, material Being, but then it will be quite fictitious also.

WHETHER it be merely *by Accident*, that we form the Idea of Space from the Observation of *extended Things*, as he objects^y, will depend upon the sort of Idea that we have of it; which, in some, may perhaps be only that of a mere *Void*, or no Resistance, as observ'd above: But this will be more fully considered hereafter. I shall only take

^y Pag. 68. and 74.

notice here that his Argument, for our having the same Idea of Space, tho' we did not perceive any thing extended, seems to be a very odd one. "If all things, says he, appear'd to us in *Points*, without any visible *Extension*, the Idea of Space would still be the same, and have the same Dimensions that we now observe amongst extended Things existing in Space^z."

Ans^w. THE juxtaposition of these Points would be the very Idea of Extension, and imaginary Lines drawn from each of these Points to other Points, would produce imaginary Dimensions also; so that by this Supposition we should be just where we are. He adds, "Suppose all the Matter in the World annihilated, and an intelligent *finite* Spirit to exist, this Spirit could not but be conscious to itself, or perceive that it was *finite*, and that something really existed without it: And supposing it to *move* every way, it would have the Idea of Space in all Dimensions"². Here again while this Author is proposing to *exclude all extended Things*, he must suppose this very Spirit to be extended, else what can he mean by the Word *finite*? Finite, in the proper Sense, is *limited*, and Limits or Limiters have nothing to do where there is no *Extension*. But supposing this intelligent Spirit to be finite or extended in a certain determinate, limited manner; yet where's the Consequence, *viz.* that therefore something really exists *without it*? His Reason, I fancy, is because there must be something to set *Bounds* to it. But Dr. Clarke would tell us, that it is *only terminated by its own Dimensions*^b. And therefore, tho' by

^z Pag. 68.

^a Ibid.

^b IVth Letter to *Leibnitz*. §. 8. p. 127.

Ch. I. the Supposition (as has been observ'd) it may require Extension *within*, yet it requires none *without* ^c.

Lastly, SUPPOSE the Case truly put, and I dare affirm it will make against our Author. If there was nothing in Nature but pure Spirits, or immaterial Beings, they would, as far as we can see, have no Perception at all of Space; at least, it cannot be proved that they would have any, till it be made appear either that they are extended themselves, or have some kind of relation to Extension; which, I think, Mr. *Jackson* has not directly attempted to shew.

THE supposed *Motion* of this intelligent Spirit will be consider'd in another Place.

As will also this Author's following Assertion^d, that the Idea of Space "is a *simple* one, as much "a simple one as any other Idea can be." In the same place he grants very justly, that "we cannot "conceive it to be without Parts:" But answers, "It is not merely a Composition of Parts, but a "Composition of various and separable Parts or "Ideas, that makes up complex Ideas."

We reply: All Parts as such, or of what kind soever, make our Ideas not strictly *simple*, but *compound* (which is the same as *complex* in Mr.

^c "'Tis humbly conceiv'd the *Ends* of Things are absolute or "independent on their being bounded or encompass'd by any "thing without them; being in reality nothing distinct from "the Things themselves. For what is it to have Ends, but to "have Extremities? If it was not so, then the immediate Reason of a Thing's being finite would be no other than the "Neighbourhood of the surrounding Beings. But who will "assert the Air or the Divine Substance itself (considered as abstracted from the Divine Power) to be the immediate Reason "that the Globe of the Earth is of a finite Extension? *Collier's Impartial Enquiry*, p. 151. See also, p. 152, 153.

^d Pag. 51.

Locke's Language, as will appear below) and in the present Case the addition of a *Substratum*, which enters into the generally receiv'd Idea of Space^c, makes it properly *complex*. That the common Idea of Space includes something more than bare Extension, appears from hence, that we generally say *Space is extended*, which would be Nonsense to affirm of Extension itself: If therefore we should allow *pure Extension* to be a *simple* Idea (which will be more fully examin'd hereafter) it does not follow that *Space* must be one too, since they are evidently not the same Ideas.

HE adds † “ Nor can they (the Ideas of Time and Space) be mere *Relations* of Matter, because their Existence has no Dependence on the Existence of Matter, and they may be conceiv'd to exist, if no Matter at all existed.” I deny the Consequence. Tho' their present Existence, or the Form in which we now conceive them, has no Dependence on the Existence of Matter (and is for that very Reason merely ideal) yet their original Being was derived from thence, as is fully shewn by Mr. *Locke* §. The ground of these two Ideas could be nothing more than certain Relations between external Things; and consequently the Ideas themselves once were *relative* ones, tho' we can easily carry them (not by Reason and Proof, but by the Power of Imagination) far beyond their original Ideata, one into Time before the Worlds, the other into *Extra-mundane* Space. Nay, we can change their very Natures, and from relative Ideas turn them into absolute; from finite and dependent, make them become indefinite and inde-

* See *Watts Essay* I. §. 3. p. 7, 8.

† *Existence and Unity*, p. 52.

§ *Hum. Und.* Book II. Ch. xiii. and xiv.

pendent ;

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pendent ; we can apply Extension where there is nothing to be extended, and Duration where there is nothing to endure, and call the one Immensity, the other Eternity. It does not then appear but that these might originally have been mere Relations of Matter, or taken their Rise from thence, tho' the Relation be since dropt out of our Minds, and we can now conceive them without the Existence of Matter “ Whether Space be only a Relation resulting from the Existence of other Beings at a Distance,” Mr. *Locke* will not determine ⁿ. *Leibnitz's* Notion of its being *the Relation of one Thing to another, arising from their respective Order and Situation*, is well explain'd in his fifth Letter to Dr. *Clarke*, §. 47. to which I apprehend the Doctor has given but a very insufficient Answer.

The foregoing Argument is repeated by Mr. *Jackson* upon several occasions, particularly against another Notion of Space which has been advanced, viz. that it is the *Absence* or Privation of Matter. “ It is farther evident, says he, that the Idea of Space is not the Idea of the privation of Matter,— “ because we have as clear and perfect an Idea of “ it excited in us where Matter is present, as “ where it is absent.” ⁱ

As Space is conceiv'd to be pure *Vacuum*, a Notion which I believe the generality of Mankind are content with, the Idea of it can only be excited in us by the absence or removal of Solidity, or by the difference which we find between the presence and absence of solid Matter, and our comparing them together : By considering how we are affected when we feel something that resists the

ⁿ Book II. chap. xiii. §. 27.

ⁱ Pag. 66.



Motion of our Bodies, and when we do not ; or by observing the presence of such Objects as have made (and we thence conclude will make) such Resistance to us, or not perceiving any such Objects ; from whence we judge that we shall meet with no such Resistance : By which means we get the Idea of Space both from *Sight* and *Touch*, as Mr. *Locke* observes ^k. But if the same Objects were always presented to us, and we alike affected by them, I don't see how we cou'd have a clear and perfect Idea of Space, or any Idea of it at all, excited in us. Indeed when we have once got this Idea from the same Things not being always present, or from the difference observ'd between their Presence and Absence, we may alter and new modify it, as in the former Case. We may transfer it, if we please, to very different Things from those which first occasion'd it ; Things directly opposite to, and inconsistent with it. We may apply it to immaterial, cogitative Beings, which are of a quite disparate kind, or even connect it with *solid Extension*, which is the very reverse. We may say, as this Author does ^l, that this Space *penetrates* all Matter ; or with the same Reason affirm, that all Matter penetrates Space. We may divide this Vacuum into *Places*, and give it the Property of *receiving Bodies*, and with like Reason ascribe to Bodies the Property of occupying or receiving it : Whereas in truth these neither penetrate nor receive, but rather *nullify* each other, as is observ'd by Dr. *Watts* ^m. “ It is a very improper thing to “ say *Space penetrates Body or Matter*, for we “ might as well say, *Light penetrates Shadow*,

^k Book II. chap. iv.

^l Pag. 53.

^m *Essays*, p. 33.

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“ whereas in truth where Light comes Shadow
 “ ceases, and is no more, for Light excludes it.
 “ May it not be as natural and just therefore to
 “ suppose that Space can never penetrate Matter,
 “ but that wheresoever Matter is, there Space is
 “ not ? Doth not Space vanish or cease utterly
 “ when and where Body comes ? I am sure *empty*
 “ *Space* ceases, and I know of no Space but *empty*
 “ *Space*.”

SEE also Dr. *Clarke*'s Notion of Space examin'd,
 p. 28. But more of this when we come to Mr. *Jack-*
son's Argument for the reality of Space from its
 having *real Properties*.

HIS next Objection is to the Idea of Space as
 arising from the Extension of Bodies *abstracted* by
 the Mind.

“ THIS Author thinks that if there is but
 “ *real Extension in Bodies*, and any *real Continuance*
 “ as of our own Existence, and of the Existence of
 “ other Things, these are sufficient to account for
 “ the Idea of Space and Time without any other
 “ external objective Reality of them. He might
 “ as well and as reasonably argue, that because we
 “ get the Idea of the Existence of God from the
 “ Existence of *outward, sensible* and *finite* Things,
 “ therefore they are abstract Ideas of them ⁿ.”

Ans. WE apprehend the two Cases to be very
 different. The Idea of God is form'd by Reason
 and an Existence conformable to it proved in
 this manner : We behold a regular System of
 Things in the Universe, which implies *Wisdom*,
 and Wisdom requires some Subject to which it may
 belong, distinct from the Things themselves : Hence
 we infer a wise Being who made and constituted

ⁿ Pag. 66, 67.



these things. Or thus, We observe Degrees of Wisdom and Intelligence in the Creatures, which require some Cause, and which is therefore communicated by, and consequently inherent in the Creator ; who must therefore be in a higher Degree wise and intelligent. But can we argue in like manner from our Idea of extended Things to the Existence of Space ? We observe Extension in Body, or particular Bodies extended ; this Extension we separate in Idea from their other Properties, and enlarge in our own Minds : But still we leave its first Ideatum where we found it, *i. e.* in the particular Bodies. Does it therefore follow that there is really *another Ideatum* correspondent to our Idea of Extension thus alter'd and enlarg'd ? Or does *this* our Idea of Extension *depend on the Existence of other Things* and require an external Cause, in the same manner as those Properties of Intelligence, &c. which we find in the Creatures ? Or, lastly, can it *infer an Ideatum*, as he urges below°, equal to it, in the same Sense, and with the same Evidence, as Effects infer an equal Cause ? Till these Particulars be reconciled, the Parallel will not hold ; neither can we, I humbly apprehend, argue quite as reasonably for the Existence of *Space*, as for that of God.

HE objects^p against the Possibility of our having an Idea of Space infinite and independent from the Extension of finite Things. “ The Idea of the “ *Independency and necessary Infinity* of Space, the “ Author of the Notes would account for, by sup- “ posing the *Extension* of Bodies, or various ex- “ tended Things to be taken apart from *Solidity*, “ and by Abstraction made a general Idea to com-

° Ibid.

^p Pag. 73.

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“prehend all particular Extensions ; and which may
 “be amplify’d every way in *infinitum*, and serve
 “(by adding an imaginary *Substratum* to it) both
 “as a common *Measure* and a common *Receptacle*
 “for all Bodies. But in Answer : If the Idea of
 “Space was nothing but the Idea of *Distances* and
 “*Order* of sensible extended Things *abstracted* from
 “Solidity, then it would follow, that the Idea of
 “Space wou’d infer it to be naturally no *larger* or
 “more *necessary* than the Things themselves ; and
 “the Mind by taking away in Idea the Existence
 “of the extended Things, cou’d conceive Space
 “actually not to exist.”

IN this Answer here are three different Notions of Space jumbled together, *viz.* that of mere *Distance*, that of the *Order* or *Relation* of Things co-existing, and that of *Extension in the Abstract* : The two former are perhaps no more necessary than the Things themselves ; *i. e.* Take away the Things and their respective *Order* and *Distance*, as well as the *Measure* whereby we computed that *Order* and *Distance*, may cease and be extinct. The Idea of Space in these two Senses may be neither absolutely necessary, infinite, nor independent : But in the third Sense of that Word, which Mr. *Jackson* was here only to consider, the Idea of it is carry’d far beyond the Existence of Things, and continued even when all Things else are supposed not to exist. It is as large as we are pleas’d to make it, and may be increased in the Mind so long as we can add one part of *Extension* to another, or have the Power of counting, which we find we always have, and therefore we can never be obliged to stop, nay rather we must always go on ; which I think sufficiently accounts for the *Necessity* this Author mentions. The negative Infinity therefore, or rather Indefiniteness, of this Idea follows of course, not from the Nature of the Things from whence

whence it was at first deriv'd, for then indeed it could not go beyond them; but from the nature of the human Mind, which when it is once set on work, wants no Pattern to work by, neither requires any external Archetypes agreeable to its Operations, but goes on uniformly without regard to the different Forms and Manners in which outward Things exist.

THAT the Mind has such a Power of separating the Modes and Properties of Things from their proper Subjects and considering them at large, is evident from a thousand Instances^a. But all these Modes and Properties, when so abstracted, immediately become *independent*; they are consider'd by way of Substances, (which is the reason that in every Language they are express'd by *Substantives*) and do not stand in need of their former Concretes: They have another and more comprehensive Subject ascribed to them; and, as this Author says of Space and Duration^r, *they transcend the Cause which produced them*. They are apply'd as common Measures to all Particulars of their kind, and are conceiv'd to subsist of themselves when these Particulars are removed. Thus Whiteness, Hardness, Number, Quantity, &c. are conceiv'd as distinct from the particular Things that are white, hard, &c. and comprehend them all. The Case is the same in most other abstract Ideas.

MR. Jackson adds^t, "As to solving the Independency of Space by applying it to the Existence of all extended Things, apply Solidity, Figure and Motion to all Existences of extended

^a See Locke on *Hum. Und.* Book II. chap. ii. §. 9. or Book iii. chap. iii.

^r *Existence and Unity*, p. 67.

^t Pag. 75.

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 "us necessarily conceive them (even by ever so
 "long thinking upon it) to be independent of any
 "Thing."

Ans. THE Independency of Space does not arise from our *applying it to* the Existence of all extended Things, but rather the contrary; 'tis made by our *separating* the Idea of Extension *from* all particular Things, and carrying it on in our Minds indefinitely; by our destroying the Relation which it had to them and rendering it absolute; which Idea then becomes independent, and may afterwards be again apply'd to particular Things, those from whence it was at first taken, or others, or all: Or it may be consider'd without regard to any, as observ'd above. It becomes also indefinite, or what is commonly call'd *infinite*, and for the same Reason that you add to it at all, you may go on perpetually adding, and can find nothing to induce you ever to stop. But of this also before, and I'm sorry we are obliged so often to repeat these things.

THE same has happen'd in the Idea of *Solidity*, which (tho' our Author will not allow it that Privilege, yet) often has, and is still by many conceiv'd to be necessary, independent, infinite, and every way commensurate to the common Idea of Space. An *Aristotelian* would contend for the Necessity of his *first Matter*, and tell us he could not possibly conceive it away, even by ever so long thinking on it. A *Cartesian* or *Spinozist* will bring the very same Arguments for the necessary Existence of solid Matter, that Mr. *Jackson* does for empty Space: And perhaps most of us might have had the same Notions of its *Infinity* at this day, had not Fact inform'd us of the contrary, and some late Experiments convinced us of a *Vacuum*, or that Matter is every way limited. His two other
 Instances

Instances of *Figure* and *Motion* are by no means parallel, since the very Idea of these implies Finiteness, and therefore they cannot, by his own Principles, be either necessary or independent.

HE proceeds, "Therefore nothing can be weaker than that Solution, unless it be the Pretence of *Use* and *Custom*. But *Use* and *Custom* cannot make one Idea more necessary than another, when both are equally natural and familiar."

I ANSWER, 1. There are no Ideas so familiar to us as those of *Extension* and *Duration*, which are suggested by, and taken up to measure every thing we meet with. *Where* and *when*, as Mr *Locke* observes†, are Questions belonging to all finite Existences, which cannot be said of any other of our Ideas.

2. BY this Author's allowing so little to the Power of *Custom* in making things appear natural which have no real Foundation in Nature, one would imagine he had never thoroughly consider'd Mr. *Locke's* Chapter on *Associations*, at least, not taken it in its due Extent. There we find Instances of the Force of Custom and Imagination full as surprising as the Case before us. To mention but one. *Spirit* seems to me to have no more Connection with *Darkness*, than with *Space*; nor can it, I believe, be ever prov'd from Principles of Reason to bear any Relation to either; and yet we find that all these three are firmly join'd together in some Mens Minds, and 'tis beyond the Power of Argument to separate them.

WHEN the Case is particular, and relates only to some few Things and Persons, we readily ascribe it to a wrong Association of Ideas, or believe it to be the Effect of a disorder'd Imagination. I don't

† Book II, chap. xv. §. 8.

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doubt but we should find many general ones no less so, if we took the same Liberty in examining them. But some of these are more easily broken than others: Some we are much less inclined to examine than others, such as have been a long time embraced by us, have enter'd into all our Schemes, and bear a considerable part in our System of Knowledge: On which account we are ready to cry out, that undermining these is subverting the Foundations of Knowledge itself, that 'tis denying the Veracity of our Faculties, and destroying *all Evidence, Truth and Certainty*. By this means it is that we often find Ideas *rushing into our Minds whether we will or no* †, and forcing themselves upon us on many occasions where they have properly no business. The Imagination is haunted with such troublesome Guests as cannot be dismiss'd of a sudden, and it would be to as little purpose to argue with one in such Circumstances, as to reason with a Man that sees Spectres or imagines himself possess'd.

UPON the whole, 'tis a very false Position which this Author lays down*, "That if the Imagination make a Thing, it can with the same Ease unmake or annihilate it." Fact and Experience declare the contrary, and assure us that it is with an unruly Imagination, even among Philosophers, as the Vulgar suppose it to be with Conjurers; they often raise a Spirit which they cannot lay again.

BUT he goes on †: "Are not *Solidity* and *Colour* as natural and familiar Ideas, as *Space* is? and yet as we can enlarge in *Idea Solidity* and

† Pag. 154.

* Ibid.

† Pag. 75.

“*Colour* without Bounds” [the latter we cannot. See *Locke*, Book. II. Chap xvii. §. 6.] “so we can in Idea set Bounds to them or annihilate them.” [the former a *Cartesian*, &c. cannot. See above.] “And the Reason plainly is, because in their Nature they are actually capable of either: But when we think on *Space*,——we not only conceive it capable of being enlarged to Infinity, but cannot but conceive it to be *actually Infinite*. And the Reason certainly is, because in its real existent Nature it is *necessarily infinite*.”

THAT the Ideas of Space and Time are essentially incapable of an *actual* or *positive Infinite*; that nothing which has Quantity, or consists of Parts in any Sense, can be conceiv'd to reach absolute Infinity, without an express Contradiction, has been already shewn², and will be consider'd farther when we come to the Ideas of *Eternity* and *Immensify*. As to the *Impossibility of setting Bounds* to the Ideas of Space and Duration, which this Author frequently insists upon, (and which if it were proved, would only shew them to be indefinite and always increasable, contrary to his Scheme) I beg leave to distinguish between Ideas of *Imagination* and Ideas of *Intellect*; in the former Sense we can and do set Bounds to Space, tho' not in the latter.

WE can conceive or *imagine* a certain Quantity of Space, or a limited Duration, as easily as we can form an Imagination of a Mathematical Sphere or Cylinder of given Dimensions, or of a Line or a Body divisible into a given Number of Parts³: Or I should rather say, whenever we frame in our Imagination an Idea of Space or Time, we *cannot*

² See the 3d Note to A.Bp. *King*, p. 15, 16, 17. 2d Ed.

³ See *Colliber*, p. 151.

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but conceive them to be limited; just as when we imagine a Body actually divided, we cannot but *conceive* it divided into a certain number of Parts, tho' at the same time we know 'tis divisible in *Infinitem*. In this Sense therefore our Ideas of Space, or any other Quantity, must have Bounds; and 'tis so far from being true that we cannot but conceive them to be *actually infinite*, that we cannot but *conceive* the direct contrary.

BUT in another Sense (which this Author might perhaps intend tho' he used the Word *conceive*) they have no Bounds, *viz.* as they are Ideas of pure *Intellect*. When we try them by abstract Reason, we cannot but perceive that Number is increasable without End; that Space and Duration are in like manner capable of being enlarged without Bounds or Measure; and the Reason is, because abstract Number and abstract Quantity are adequate to every *Thing* that can be number'd or measured; or because nothing can exhaust them. And this very thing demonstrates that they are nothing but Ideas of pure Intellect, and have no regard to the Existence of any external Object, and that therefore to limit them is to destroy one of our Faculties, *viz.* that of numbering, as was shewn from the excellent Writer cited in *Note 3.*^b and referr'd to above. 'Twould be to deny that we have the Power of repeating the same Idea, or of adding one of our own Ideas to another, while we find we actually have it. The Reason then of their Indefiniteness is with me, not "because in their real existent Natures they are necessarily infinite," but quite the reverse, *viz.* because they have no *real existent Nature* at all. If this Account be not satisfactory to our Author, I must refer him to the Force of

^b 2d Edit.



Association intimated above. Or lastly, if he pleases, I will own to him, that I know not the Reason why we cannot set Bounds to some of our Ideas, *viz.* those of *Quantity*, every way consider'd : (which at the same Time, and for the same Reason, we perceive to be in their own Natures incapable of an absolute, positive, or what I call *Metaphysical*, Infinite) and why we can bound others, *v.g.* those of all *Qualities* : (which yet are the only ones capable of a positive infinite *Perfection*, or absolutely highest *Degree*.) But then I must desire to have it remember'd, that the Ideas of both these sorts may for all this be only Ideas still ; and that their being or not being capable of either kind of Infinity does by no means shew them to have corresponding Archetypes, or any real Archetypes at all. This remains to be proved as much as ever.

I SHALL therefore, in the next Place, proceed to our Authors direct Arguments for the *real Existence* of Space : The first of which is this.

“ THE Ideas of Space and Time are *simple*
“ Ideas ;

“ THEREFORE they have their objective Re-
“ alities ;

“ THEREFORE Space and Time are *real*.]

A SIMPLE Idea in the proper Sense, *i. e.* in that which proves an *objective Reality*, is, according to Mr. Locke, “ in it self *uncompounded*, and contains in it nothing but one uniform Appearance or Conception of the Mind, and is not distinguishable into *different* Ideas. ” He might have added, “ or *more* Ideas,” in conformity to his ge-

* Book II. chap. ii. §. 1.

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neral Scheme, tho' I suppose he meant the same here. Of these simple Ideas he affirms that they have some external *Cause*, tho' it is often very different from them: ^d 'That they are not always exactly the Resemblances of something inherent in the Subject; most of those of Sensation being in the Mind no more the Likeness of something existing without us, than the Names that stand for them are the Likeness of our Ideas, which yet upon hearing they are apt to excite in us. ^e But then, as the Mind is wholly passive in the Reception of all these, so it exerts several Acts of its own whereby other Ideas are framed. ^f These Acts of the Mind are chiefly three. 1. Combining several simple Ideas into one compound one; thus all *complex* Ideas are made. 2. Bringing two Ideas, whether simple or complex, together, and setting them by one another, so as to take a view of them at once, without uniting them into one; by which it gets all its Ideas of *Relations*. The 3d is, Separating them from all other Ideas that accompany them in their real Existence: This is called *Abstraction*; and thus all its *general* Ideas are made ^g.

ALL Ideas formed in any of the three Ways abovementioned, Mr. *Locke* calls *complex* Ideas; which he divides again into three sorts: *Modes*, *Substances*, and *Relations*. ^h Modes are either *simple* or *mix'd*: The former being only different Combinations of the same Idea; as a Dozen, a

^d Ch. viii. §. 1, 2.

^e §. 7.

^f Ch. xii. §. 1.

^g Book II. ch. xii. §. 1. Compare ch. xi. §. 9.

^h §. 3, 4.

Score, &c.ⁱ and in the Parts of *Space*, an Inch, an Ell, &c.ⁱ But both these are in Mr. *Locke's* Sense *complex Ideas*, and expressly so denominated, as well in his general Division abovementioned, as in Ch. xi. §. 6, &c. More particularly, Ch. xv. §. 9. and in the Note annexed, he titles the Ideas of *Space or Extension and Duration*, COMPLEX MODES. 'Tis true, as this Author observes^k, he allows that Space and Duration *may have a Place amongst* our simple Ideas; but I must beg leave also to observe, that this is contrary both to his Definition and Division laid down above, and that the Reason here assign'd is quite foreign, *viz.* because the Parts whereof they are compounded are of the *same kind*; ¹ which would indeed intitle them to a Place among *simple Modes*, but can by no means make them *simple Ideas*, according to Mr. *Locke's* Scheme. Nay, the Reason, which immediately follows, will shew us that we can have *no* simple Idea of them, or any of their Parts. " 'Tis the very Nature of them (says Mr. *Locke*) " to consist of Parts; " and in the following Note, " Their Essence consists in having Parts of the same " kind, and you can never come to a Part entirely " exempted from all Composition." I add, and therefore we can never come at a simple Idea in them: We can never so much as imagine a *Minimum*, or absolutely least Part, since they are essentially divisible *in infinitum*. Every Idea then of Extension, which, according to Mr. *Locke*, consists in having *Partes extra Partes*,^m is so far from be-

^{i i} Ibid.

^k *Existence and Unity*, p. 63.

¹ Note to §. 9.

^m Note *ibid.*

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IF, to avoid this Consequence, Mr. Jackson have recourse to a *mathematical Point*, and insist upon that being a simple Idea; we answer, such a Point is strictly no *Quantity*, but only the beginning of *Quantity*, or rather an intermediate Idea between *Quantity* and no *Quantity*, and therefore it can have nothing to do either with Body or Space. There is properly no one such Point in Space (supposing it to be any thing real) because every Part of it is made up of others, as every Part of Body is made up of Particles; and therefore we cannot argue from Mathematical Points, which are only abstract Ideas, to those of Space, which are supposed to be real, physical Points, or

ⁿ Ibid.

^o Book II. ch. xxv. §. 1, & 10.

^p Ch. xxviii. §. 19.



else there is nothing in the Argument drawn from them.

FROM what has been said, I think it appears, that Extension is not, and much less Space, a *simple Idea*, in any proper Sense, however not in such as must infer an objective Reality; and to use it in any other (*v. g.* in that of the Author, of Procedure, Extent, &c. ¹) is nothing to the purpose: By this means a *Man* or a *House* may become simple Ideas, because they cannot be divided into *more* Men or Houses (as the same Author argues) and by the same way of Reasoning *Noah's Ark*, or the whole Universe, may be a simple Idea. And indeed all these seem to have as good a Title to Simplicity as *Space* and *Time*. The Parts of each are alike innumerable; the *Uniformness* and *Continuity* of those of the two latter (which this Author urges ²) will make them not equally *mixt* indeed (if we set aside the Notion of their *Substratum*) but no less *compounded* or *complex* than the former.

As to what farther regards Mr. *Locke's* Opinion, we have seen that by his Definition, and the general Division of his Book, these are not simple Ideas; but, being desirous to reduce them as near as possible to that Class, he adds, ³ "That the
" least Portion of Space or Extension, whereof we
" have a clear and distinct Idea, may perhaps be
" the fittest to be considered by us *as a simple*
" Idea of that kind, out of which our *complex*
" Modes of Space and Extension are made up."
But this will not much mend the Matter, since it is impossible to come at any absolutely least Portions

¹ Ch. v. p. 100.

² *Existence and Unity*, p. 63.

³ Note to ch. xv. §. 9.

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of them, as was observed above. In the last place, Mr. *Locke* seems to give up the Point, and speaks of this same Space as not exactly agreeing with his Distribution of Ideas, but thinks it better to leave it where it is, than to make a new Division in its favour ^t.

IT does not therefore yet appear that we are obliged, ^v either from Mr. *Locke*'s Authority, or any Reason offer'd by this Author, to allow the Ideas of Space and Time to be *simple* ones.

BUT, *secondly*, granting that they are such, yet it will never follow that they have *objective Realities*, in this Author's Sense, but only something or other without, or some difference in external things, which may occasion them. It has been observ'd ^{*} from Mr. *Locke*, that bare *Privations* in the Subject are often sufficient to occasion positive Ideas in our Mind, and Instances given in Darkness, Silence, &c. Mr. *Jackson* replies, ^v "Here it is to be observ'd that Mr. *Locke* speaks doubtfully, and says *perhaps* the Causes which produce them are barely Privations. Strictly speaking, a Privation, which is *Nothing*, can be no Cause of, or produce any Idea."

I ANSWER : If Mr. *Locke* were doubtful, yet the Reason which he assigns, and which this Author will not find it easy to confute, shews sufficiently that mere Privations may cause positive Ideas, *viz.* by an Abatement of some former Motion in the animal Spirits, or in those Organs of the Body, of what kind soever they be, which serve to convey

^t Ibid.

^v *Existence and Unity*, p. 64.

^{*} Note the 3d to King, p. 10. 2d Edit. and *Postscript* p. 17. 8vo.

^v Pag. 65.

Ideas, and which convey them only by different modes of Motion. Mr. *Locke* adds ^z “ I appeal to every one’s own Experience whether the Shadow of a Man, tho’ it consists of nothing but the absence of Light (and the more the Absence of Light is, the more discernible is the Shadow) does not, when a Man looks on it, cause as clear and positive an Idea in his Mind, as a Man himself, tho’ cover’d over with clear Sunshine? And the Picture of a Shadow is a positive thing.” See also §. 8.

THERE are then *Ideas*, in Mr. *Locke*’s Sense of that Word, real and positive ones, originally occasion’d by what he justly calls Privations in the Subject. The immediate Causes of them may be a Cessation or Abatement of Motion in the Organs of the Body, and this Cessation or Abatement of Motion may arise from mere Defect, from the absence or withdrawing of the moving Power, and consequently these Ideas are in one Sense *produced by nothing*

MR. *Jackson* adds ^a, “ The Truth is, it is the real Subject, which, as by being present, it caused one sort of Idea, so, by being absent, it caused another. We could never have had the Idea of Darknesh, if Light had never been, nor of Blacknesh, if there had been no Colour. So that Light by having been present, and then being absent, is the Cause of the Idea of Darknesh and Blacknesh. But these are not Ideas in Mr. *Locke*’s Sense of Ideas, but only Names expressing the Absence of Ideas.”

WHETHER these be positive Ideas or not, or any Ideas at all, must be determin’d by every Man’s

^z Book II. chap. vii. § 5.

^a Pag. 65.

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own Perception. Mr. *Locke's* Opinion of them has been given above. As to this Author's Account, tho' in different Words, and design'd to give a different Turn to the Argument, yet it really leaves it where it was. For what, I pray, is any Thing's being the Cause of an Idea *by its Absence*, or by its *being absent*, but a mere Privation? Where's the difference between an Idea proceeding from the absence of a real Subject, and one proceeding from no real Subject? When Mr. *Locke* says it will be hard to determine whether the Ideas above-mention'd arise from bare Privations, he is not doubtful whether the outward Occasions of them be Privations or no; he was so far vers'd in the Elements of Natural Philosophy, as to make it impossible for him to dispute whether Black, Darkness, &c. were real Properties of any external Object: However, we know better now a-days than to doubt of it. But that which Mr. *Locke*, according to his usual Modesty, would not determine, was (as he immediately adds) whether "Rest be any more a Privation than Motion:" That is, the Rest or Motion in those Organs of the Body which are the immediate Conveyers of all our Ideas. Whether this Rest, I say, or Cessation of Motion, were not as positive as the Motion itself, was the only Point which Mr. *Locke* thought hard to determine. He cou'd never doubt whether the Presence or Action of any external Object was requisite to produce this same Rest in the Organs of the Body and that Idea in the Mind which is consequent upon it; and which is not properly caused *by* this Rest, Absence or Privation, but rather depends on that Union of the Soul and Body, whereby 'tis order'd that all such Absence of any thing which did once affect the latter, should be perceiv'd or taken notice of by the former; or that the Soul shou'd have a Consciousness, or *positive Idea* of it, in

Mr.

Mr. Locke's Sense, nay, in any Sense of these Words: For, strictly speaking, every Idea *as such*, or as it is a *Perception in the Mind*, must necessarily be positive, a negative Perception being really the same as no Perception at all.

WELL then, I think, we may safely conclude that there are Ideas without correspondent Ideata, or, properly speaking, any Ideata; *the Absence of Light*, according to this Author, and Cessation of Sound, being all that is necessary from without to occasion the Perception, Consciousness, or whatever we call it, in us, of Darkness and Silence. And that we really have Ideas affixed to both these Words, is full as clear as that we have a Meaning to the Word Space. I'm sure I find myself apt to conceive of both these as of something, 'till better informed by Philosophy (and that not from the Words,^b but the Ideas which I really have of them) in the same manner as I do of Space, and therefore have the very same Right to term that Word a *Negation of certain Ideas*, which any one has to give that Title to the others.

GRANTING then (which I apprehend cannot with Reason be denied) that we have *Ideas* of these two somewhats signified by the Words Darkness and Silence, and finding at the same time that these imaginary somewhats are really nothing *ad extra*; we have an Instance of what the Defenders of Dr. Clarke esteem so very unaccountable, *viz. Two nothings which yet have something to distinguish them*; a mere ideal Difference, or a Difference in these two Ideas, being enough to constitute a Distinction between them, as is observed elsewhere.

^b *Existence and Unity*, p. 66.

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AGAIN, as the Difference between Light and Darkness consists in the Presence or Absence of a luminous Body, without supposing the latter to be some *thing* or positive Cause, which would be a Contradiction : So the Difference between *two Bodies touching or not touching* (another famous Topic amongst them) may with like Reason be placed in their Presence to, or Absence from each other, without supposing any Thing, Quality, &c. *between* them, to constitute their *Distance* ; or any thing more than an Idea to make it capable of being consider'd apart from the Bodies themselves.

At the Conclusion of this Argument Mr. *Jackson* seems to change the State of the Question in these Words: " So it is still to be disproved, that
 " any *simple* Idea would *ever have been* in the Mind,
 " if there was not something *positive* without to
 " cause it." ^c This we grant in one Sense, *viz.* That perhaps it cannot be proved (nor does the proving part belong to us) that there would have been any Ideas in the Mind, had there not been something or other without, to give the Mind some original Perception, and first set it on work. But when this is once begun, it may be shewn that a perpetual Train of Ideas will succeed of course, will arise from and be propagated out of each other, the Absence or Abatement of one begetting another distinct from it, and so on *in infinitum*. Thus the first Ideas we got, such as of Heat and Cold, Light and Darkness, Motion and Rest, as well as the general Ideas of Pleasure and Pain accompanying any of them, were mutually related, and rais'd each other ; the absence or ceasing of Pleasure being some degree of Pain, and *vice versa* : By which means we may conceive the Soul to have always

^c Pag. 66.



had Ideas from its first beginning to think. But this by the bye.

ALLOWING therefore that something positive without might be necessary to *begin* any of these or the like Ideas, yet this will do our Author no service, since the same Ideas may be *continued* without the Existence of the same Objects, and new ones, and *simple* ones too, produced by the Abatement or Alteration of the Force impressed, or even by the Absence or Inaction of these Objects, as well as by their actual Presence and Operation. 'Tis no Consequence, that because something was necessary to give the Mind its first simple Ideas, or to put it on thinking at all, that therefore the Presence of this or the like real thing must still be necessary to the Continuance of its Thought, or to its having any other simple Ideas ; or that it cannot take occasion to frame to itself simple Ideas, even from its wanting those Objects, or comparing the Difference between its having and not having them, or its having more or less of them. The new Modification of any Idea becomes a new one, according to Mr. *Locke* ; and reflecting upon the Operations of the Mind about our simple Ideas will produce other simple ones, according to the same Author.

BUT I am afraid we have been too tedious on this Point, and shall therefore beg leave to dismiss it with an Observation of the judicious *Crousaz*.^a “ The Logicians have almost to a “ Man laid it down as an important Maxim, or a “ Paradox, that there is no Error in *simple Per-* “ *ceptions*. But this Remark to me seems founded “ on an Equivocation, and, when rightly explain’d, “ falls to nothing. It is an Error when we con- “ ceive things to be otherwise than what they really

^a *New Art of Thinking*, Vol. I. p. 13. Eng. Edit.

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“ are. If then, by means of an erroneous Idea,
 “ we imagine an Object which that Idea ought re-
 “ gularly to represent, whereas in truth no such
 “ Object is really *existing*, I cannot see why we
 “ must not be said to have formed a false Idea.
 “ ——— Our Error consists not in forming the Idea,
 “ but in applying it, and taking it for what it is
 “ not: in supposing it to represent an Object which
 “ it really does not represent.”

Mr. *Jackson's* second Argument is this:

“ THE Ideas of Space and Time *force* their
 “ their actual Existence upon us ;

“ THEREFORE the Existence of them is *positive*
 “ and *necessary* : ”

WHICH he proposes more fully in the Words of
 Dr. *Clarke*. “ If we have in our Minds the Idea
 “ of a thing, and cannot possibly in our Imagina-
 “ tions take away the Idea of that thing as actually
 “ existing, any more than we can change or take
 “ take away the Idea of the Equality of twice Two
 “ to Four, the certainty of the Existence of that
 “ thing is the same, and stands on the same Found-
 “ ation as the certainty of the other Relation,”
 “ and this in fact is the Case with us in respect of
 “ the Ideas of Time and Space.”^e

I HAVE in a good measure obviated this Argu-
 ment and the Illustration of it already, particularly
 in Answer to p. 45. and shall therefore dispatch it
 more briefly. *First* then, we deny that the Ideas
 of Space and Time necessarily force themselves
 upon us, since we can, and must consider all im-

^e *Existence and Unity*, p. 69.



material Beings without the former †, and the Deity, as existing alone, or before all Creation, without the latter §.

2dly, IF any Idea of Space force itself on the generality of Mankind, 'tis not this Author's Idea, but that of mere *Emptiness*, as Dr. *Watts* has justly observ'd ^h.

3dly, IT has been shewn that the Consequence is not good from Ideas in our Minds to things without; or that our Conception of a thing, *as actually existing*, will not of itself prove that thing actually to exist. I add, there are other Ideas which equally *force* themselves on some Minds, and are as impossible to be removed as Space and Time, which yet are evidently abstract Ideas and nothing more; such as Fate, Nature, Fortune, Order, Chance: To which we may add Necessity, Truth, Motion, Rest, &c.

4thly, SUPPOSING our Imagination in this Case to be very strongly connected with the Notion of their actual Existence (which has been already accounted for) yet it has been likewise observ'd that this falls short of the Point; since a Connection of Ideas may be either *natural or acquired*; either a necessary, rational one, which produces real Knowledge; or an accidental, absurd one, commonly known by the Name of *Association*. The Question will be, to which of the two does this belong? Wherever there is the former kind of Connection, it may be made appear, and the contrary Supposition reduced to an express Contra-

† See Note the 7th to *King*, p. 345. 2d Edit. and Dr. *Watts* on the Locality and *Whereness* of Spirits, *Essay* 6. Sect. 2, 3, 4, 5. and *Essay* 1. p. 17.

§ Remark c. p. 68, &c. 2d Edit.

^h *Essays*, p. 31, 32.

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dition; as was observ'd in the Connection between the Ideas of twice Two and Four and that of Equality: And if the Connection between the Idea of Space and that of real Existence were of the same kind, sure it might be made out with the same Evidence, and all Oppugners of it as easily reduced to an apparent Self-contradiction.

IF it were either self-evident or capable of clear Proof, one would think the World should be as much agreed about it, after so many elaborate Arguments for and Explications of it, as they are about the Equality of twice Two to Four.

THIS Mr. *Jackson* will not affirm; and, till this happen, I must beg leave to doubt whether its *Certainty stands upon the same Foundation* as that of the other.

INDEED Dr. *Clarke* in another Passage cited by this Author ⁱ has endeavour'd to fix some Contradictions on those who deny the Reality of Space; but they are such as evidently beg the Question, and suppose that we allow it to be something real at the same time that we declare the contrary. Thus he proves that Bounds cannot be apply'd to it ^k: "To set Bounds to Space is to suppose it "bounded by something which itself takes up Space, "and that's a Contradiction."

Ans. "THE is no Contradiction maintain'd by us, who say that Space, according to our Notion of it, has nothing at all to do with Bounds and Bounders, any more than Absence, Emptiness, or any abstract Ideas have ^l. He adds, "Or else that it is "bounded by *Nothing*, and then the Idea of that

ⁱ Pag. 70.

^k Ibid.

^l Note the 3d to King, p. 12, 13. 2d Edit.

“*Nothing* will still be *Space*.” Allow’d, say we, because that *Space* is *Nothing*. Again; “*Nothing* cannot have real Qualities^m.” Agreed: Nor do we allow any of the supposed Properties of *Space* to be *real*; of which under the next Argument.

THE *Heap of Contradictions* which Mr. Jackson has compiledⁿ depend in like manner on a Supposition that we either do, or ought to maintain the Reality of *absolute Place* and *absolute Motion*, which we think we have good Reason to discard, as will appear under his Fifth and Seventh Arguments. As to Mr. Locke’s Judgment alledg’d here by this Author, we have shewn in the Case of Number, that his Notion of the Infinity of *Space* and *Time* was only *negative*, and so far from forcing us to believe them really infinite, in the proper Sense of that Word, that it demonstrates the Impossibility of ever conceiving them to be positively infinite: their Infinity, as he tells us, lying only in a Power of adding to them as long and as much as one will. Book II. chap. 17. §. 13, &c.

THO’ it were a sufficient Answer to this Argument drawn from the Idea of *Space* forcing itself upon us, to deny the Fact, since we are not obliged to prove the Negative; yet we shall advance a step farther, and endeavour to shew that the Idea is not really natural and necessary, but acquired, and owing rather to Habit than any unavoidable Report of Sense. *Distance* between Objects is, according to Mr. Jackson, *real Space* one way consider’d, and which therefore ought to *rush* into our Minds as necessarily as the Ideas of external Objects, whenever our Eyes are open. But of this we have naturally no Idea, and require a good

^m *Existence and Unity*, p. 70.

ⁿ Pag. 71, 72.

Ch. I. deal of time to learn it ; as appears from the known Experiment of a Gentleman brought to Sight by Mr. *Chefelden*, who for some time could not help imagining that every thing was immediately contiguous to him^o. Nor, 2^{dly}, When we have once got an Idea of Distance, can we ever have any fix'd natural way of measuring it, or come at any tolerable Certainty in judging of its Parts: No Rules in Optics can determine it, as appears from the best Writers on that Subject, who are forced to resolve all into Habit, Prejudice, and the like^p. The thing is still more evident in Persons losing or dis-ordering one of their Eyes, who have then very different Ideas of Distances from what they had before, as Mr. *Boyle* informs us^q. The like may be observed by any one upon closing one of his Eyes for some time, or viewing an Object with his Head in a very inclined Posture.

How far these Cases will affect our Author's Argument I leave to be consider'd ; and pass on to his Third Proof.

“SPACE and Time have *real Properties* ;

“THEREFORE they are *real*.”

THIS he supports by an *Affertion*^r, “Space is not only conceiv'd, but is *necessarily* conceiv'd

^o *Philosophical Transactions*, N^o. 40. §. 7. p. 448. “When he first saw he was so far from making any judgment about Distances, that he thought all Objects *touch'd his Eyes* (as he express'd it) as what he felt did his Skin.” The same Account may be met with at the end of *Chefelden's Anatomy*, 2^d Edit. or in Dr. *Smith's Opticks*, Book I. chap. v. p. 43.

^p See Dr. *Smith*, *ibid.* p. 46, 49, 58, &c.

^q Some uncommon Observations about vitiated Sight, p. 256, &c.

^r *Existence and Unity*, p. 77.



“to have *Dimensions*, or to be Quantity inducd
“with *Dimensions*; this Author cannot conceive
“otherwise; which makes a wide Difference be-
“tween Space and abstract Ideas, which are merely
“the Work of the Mind, and exist no where else.”

’Tis true, when we have the Idea of Space in our
Minds we cannot but have that of *Dimensions*, be-
cause we make it the Standard and Measure of all
Dimensions, as observ’d above; or rather it is no-
thing but *Dimensions*; but whether these *Dimen-*
sions be any thing more than ideal ones, still wants
Proof. Mathematicians are used to conceive cer-
tain Lines, Surfaces, and Solids (each of which is
very *different* from the other, and has different *Pro-*
perties) which serve their Purpose full as well as if
they were *real*; but these they know are mere ab-
stract Ideas, and have no proper Existence any
where but in their own Heads. Tho’ by this Au-
thor’s way of arguing they might all be proved to
exist *ad extra*: Nor is Space really any thing else
but a *Mathematical Solid*†. We have mention’d
other abstract Ideas which many Persons cannot
conceive otherwise than as *real Entities*, but which
Philosophy enables us to get rid of; tho’, if we are
not aware, it may in its turn impose some upon us
which the generality of Mankind would never have
dreamt on. I grant that *infinite Weight*‡ is as
great an Absurdity as our Author pleases, but, as
we consider it *in the Abstract*, ’tis equally capable
of an unlimited Increase, and might, I think, as
well be maintain’d as infinite Length, Breadth, and
Depth; and as he is able to suppose *a Number so*
*great that a greater cannot be conceiv’d**, as also

† See Note the 6th to *King*, p. 26, 27. 2d Edit.

‡ *Existence and Unity*, p. 78.

* Pag. 87.

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HIS next Proof of a real Property of Space is by a *Supposition* that the *Distance* between two Bodies is something real. "I am considering why "I cannot shake Hands with the Man in the Moon, "and my Reason tells me, the Cause is because "there is a vast real Distance or Space between "us, which exceeds the Extension of my Arm; "and that I can conceive and be certain that if this "Space was really away, or not between us, that "I could touch the Moon." This is the same with the sixth Argument, or that of the two Walls above-mention'd.

To the first Part I reply with the ingenious Author of *Dr. Clarke's* Notion of Space examin'd^z, That there's a difference between Things touching and not touching, and that pure Space, without supposing it to be any Thing really existing, is sufficient to constitute this Difference, or to give us an Idea of Things being distant: An imaginary Line between any two Bodies will hinder our conceiving them to be contiguous as much as a real one. Wherever any two Bodies do not touch, there we may conceive a Possibility for a Line of a certain Length to be put between them: Where they do touch, we cannot place a Line between them even in Imagination: but still the Possibility of supposing any such Line is not the *Cause* why these Bodies do not really touch, nor is their not touching any more a Proof that there's some real

^y Ibid.

^z Pag. 37.



Thing or Property *between* them (call it Space, Distance, or what you please) than that there's a real Line or Surface between them. Nor, lastly, can this same Space or Distance, supposed to be between them, any more prevent their touching than a mere *Possibility* can; or, as Dr. Clarke somewhere has it, than *an abstract Notion can kick a Foot-ball*.

SUPPOSE then the Space away between me and the Man in the Moon, and in its stead conceive mere Absence of Matter, Emptiness or Void; yet how shall we be any thing nearer shaking Hands for all this? And will you say that Absence, Emptiness or Void prevents it? The Ocean divides *Africa* and *America*; suppose this Ocean, and every thing else between the two Continents, annihilated, would this bring the Continents together? Or would their respective Order and Position be a whit altered by this? The Annihilation of every thing between them is surely not the same Idea as their touching one another, nor do these two Ideas necessarily infer each other; and of consequence this Author's second Proposition, implied above and afterwards insisted on, *viz.* That if there be nothing between two things, they must therefore touch; is as groundless as the first; and this, like his other Argument, takes for granted the very thing in question.

I SHALL beg leave to subjoin the Testimony of Dr. *Watts*, in answer to the foregoing Objection. ^a
 " May it not be answered by a round Denial of
 " this Proposition, *If there be nothing between them,*
 " *then they touch, or are close together?* Why may
 " not two Bodies be created or placed at twenty
 " Miles distance, and yet nothing but Emptiness,

^a *Essays*, pag. 39.

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“ *i. e.* no real Being, between them? However
 “ harsh and uncouth it may sound to learned Ears
 “ that these *two Bodies are twenty Miles asunder,*
 “ *and they do not touch tho’ there be nothing be-*
 “ *tween them,* yet the vulgar World, who very
 “ much determine the common Sense of Words,
 “ will allow this Language to be good: For they
 “ generally suppose Space to be *Emptiness*, that is,
 “ to be *nothing*. And if the Learned are offended
 “ with this Language, ’tis because they have, of
 “ late Years at least, run into this Supposition, that
 “ Space is a *real something*; and ’tis merely their
 “ own espoused Opinion that makes this Expression
 “ offensive to them, which the vulgar part of Man-
 “ kind approve of, if you give them leave to think
 “ a little.”

It had been objected, that to suppose real Properties of Space, and that Space itself is only a Property of something else, is supposing Properties to inhere in one another. Mr. Jackson replies,^b
 “ There’s no Difficulty in it. Do not we ascribe
 “ *Infinity* to the Power and Knowledge of God, as
 “ also *Eternity, Independency, &c?* And the ascrib-
 “ ing *Penetrability, Immobility, Simplicity, Incor-*
 “ *ruptibility, Incorporeity, Infinity, Incomprehensi-*
 “ *bility, necessary Existence, and Eternity,* to Space,
 “ is no more.” I answer,

MOST of these Properties, which this Author is pleased to ascribe to Space, have been already proved not to belong to it, the rest are mere Negations; and if he means no more by his Properties, we will acquit them of the Absurdity of inhering in one another, or of wanting any thing to inhere in. They are not *Properties* in the strict philosophical Sense of that Word, but only Modes of Apprehension, or so many Modifications of certain

^b Pag. 80;

Ideas, and which may, without any Difficulty, be ascribed to many other Ideas as well as those of Space and Duration. But we must likewise observe, that these are so far from answering our Author's Purpose in this Argument, *i.e.* inferring the *Reality* of every Subject they are ascribed to, that they will equally flow from a real or imaginary Subject, and their own Reality must depend on the Reality of the Subject to which we ascribe them. Thus we may attribute *Infinity*, *Eternity*, *Independency*, &c. to absolute *Malevolence*, as easily as to perfect *Goodness*, and to both in the same Sense as this Author does to *Knowledge*, *Power*, &c. But this will never prove one or other of the foregoing Qualities to be *real*, or to have actual Being, because these several Properties, as they are term'd, of *Infinity*, &c. may be *ideal* only.

Aristotle's Materia prima, and the *Plenum* of *Des Cartes*, had each as many Properties, and full as considerable Effects in their Systems of Philosophy, as *Dr. Clarke's Space*: I may add, and, as far as appears from this Author's Argument, as real positive ones too; since we may have as clear and positive an Idea of such kind of Properties, and draw as many Consequences from them, whether the Subject to which they are ascribed be real or fictitious: And one would think some of those nine above-mentioned, which our Author has affixed to Space (*Incomprehensibility* for instance) could furnish but a poor Argument for its Reality.

LET us take the Case then which way we will, it must bear hard upon our Author. If these be real Properties of Space, and Space itself be only a Property, then we have *Properties inhering in one another*: If they be not real Properties of Space, they'll not be sufficient to establish its *Reality*, and so the whole Argument built on them falls to the Ground.

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FOR a more ample Confutation of the supposed Properties of Space, I refer to Dr. *Watts*,^c and proceed to the Fourth Argument.

“ SPACE and Time are *necessarily infinite*, which
 “ no Idea can be ;

“ THEREFORE they are not *Ideas*, but *real*
 “ Attributes.”^d

THIS Argument, when put into Form, contains the five following Propositions. 1. Space and Time are *necessarily infinite*. 2. But no *Idea* can be necessarily infinite. 3. Therefore Space and Time are *not Ideas*. 4. Therefore they are *real*; and, 5. They are *Attributes*.

As to the first Part, we have already shewn the Inconclusiveness of all Arguments hitherto brought to prove the *actual* Existence of Space and Time, 'till which be made out 'twill be lost labour to enquire after their Infinity. If these be nothing but *Ideas*, their *Infinity* will be no more than *ideal Infinity*, and consequently it can never be urged as a distinct Proof of their *real* Existence; tho' it is very unaccountably introduced among the other Arguments for that only purpose.^e In this Point therefore our Author does, and must necessarily, beg the Question. He must suppose the real Existence of Space and Time before he can attempt to prove them infinite: And, if he have already proved that real Existence, his present Attempt is useless; if he have not, 'tis evidently insufficient;

^c *Essay* I. §. 8, 9, 10.

^d Pag. 81.

^e See p. 56. where Mr. *Jackson* files all these Arguments for the *actual Existence* of Time and Space.



since it must presuppose the very thing it is brought to establish.

BUT secondly, In what Sense are these necessarily *infinite*? In the same as Number, the Parts of Matter, and all Quantity, *i. e.* a *negative* one. We cannot set any Bounds to them;^f and this necessary Infinity we learn from their *Ideas*, “ which “ of themselves naturally lead us to think that they “ are actually boundless.”^g

IF our Author will stick to this kind of Infinite, we readily allow it: Since 'tis such as is incompatible with real Existence; 'tis, as Mr. *Locke* says,^h adjusting a growing Measure to a standing Bulk; and cannot be applied to any positive thing without an express Contradiction, as has been often observed above. And yet even this roving, indeterminate, ever-growing Infinite is more than can be made out on our Author's Principles, from which it will only follow that we are able to *find* no Bounds in Space and Time; not that we can ever know that they actually *have* none. For how can their *Ideas* naturally of themselves lead us to an actual Infinity, if his second Proposition be true, *viz.* That *no Idea* can be *infinite*? Or indeed how can we be led at all to any kind of Infinity? When a Person undertakes to prove the Existence of some infinite thing from his Idea of Infinity, as Dr. *Clarke* has done, one would think it the Business of an Objector to urge that all Ideas are finite, and that from *finite* Ideas no Consequence can be drawn to any thing *infinite*. But some Authors, we find, are so happy as to be able to turn this very Objection to their own Advantage, and infer the

^f Pag. 70. from Dr. *Clarke*.

^g Pag. 72, 73. from Mr. *Locke*.

^h Book II. ch. xvii. §. 7.

Ch. I. direct contrary, viz. That the thing must be necessarily infinite, because our Ideas can represent it only as finite. This, if I mistake not, must be the Result of Mr. Jackson's Argument, and this will at the same time be an unsurmountable Objection against it. For he will allow, that all the Knowledge we have either of the Nature or Existence of Space and Time, arises only from our Ideas of them; and if these Ideas are necessarily finite, 'twill always be very reasonably ask'd, Why then should not we conclude that these things themselves (if they be any real things) are finite also? At least, how does it appear that they are otherwise?

HE answers from Dr. Clarke, that our Reason will demonstrate them to be infinite.ⁱ But can any Reasoning which is entirely grounded on the Ideas we receive of a thing, prove that thing to be directly the reverse of what those very Ideas represent it to be? Can we from a negative Idea conclude the *Idea-tum* to be positive; or, from a Possibility of always adding to our Idea, infer an Object absolutely incapable of Addition? By this Method our Reason may demonstrate any thing from any thing.

BUT Mr. Jackson seems to have been sensible that this second Proposition of his is either groundless, or will make against him, and accordingly he gives it up two or three Pages after, and begins to argue for the positive Infinity of Space, Time, and Number, from the Infinity of our Ideas of them; or, which I think must amount to the same, he urges, that "*these are incapable of Increaseableness* EVEN IN IDEA:"^k And again,^l "A Person may think of an *Inch* of Space and no more,

ⁱ Pag. 82, 83.

^k Pag. 87.

^l Pag. 88.

“ or of a *Minute* of Time and no more, or of an
 “ *Unite* and no more, and to these he may add
 “ *in infinitum*: But as these are only Parts of the
 “ *Idea* of Space, Time and Number, the *Infinity*
 “ of which makes up the *whole and perfect Idea*,
 “ so they are not capable of any possible or con-
 “ ceivable Addition.”

THIS is recurring to the other kind of Infinite, and at the same time owning that our Ideas are *adequate* thereto; for what else can we understand by this *whole perfect Idea* which 'tis impossible to enlarge? If our Author asserts this to get clear of the Objection which he is often press'd with, *viz.* that his Idea of Infinite can neither be *absolute* nor *positive*, he is concerned to reconcile it both with the Tenor of his present Argument, and that other Assertion at the Beginning of it; *viz.* “ Our positive internal Conception of them is necessarily finite, but yet we find we cannot but add *in infinitum*, not to the *Ideas* formed in the Imagination, there is soon an end of them, but to the *Ideatums* or *Things themselves*. ” ^m Where by *Ideatums* and *Things* I fancy he means no more than *Ideas of Intellect*; for I would not suppose him to mean that we can add to *real Space*, of which he will not allow us even to *conceive one Inch more than actually exists*: ⁿ And by their *Infinity* he must understand only *Indefiniteness*, or his former kind of Infinite; which has been shewn to follow from the Nature of our own Minds, or from our Faculty of repeating, rather than from any external *Thing*. Nay, if we went by any *Ideatum* at all in framing these Ideas, and consider'd Space and Time as things actually existing, and composed of real

^m Pag. 83.

ⁿ Pag. 87. and again, Pag. 91.

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Parts, we might, for what I see, as easily set bounds to them, and assign a determinate Number of these Parts, as we can in *Matter*, which, as our Author justly observes,^o “ requires no greater Extent, or larger Existence, than the *Ideatum* actually has. But, adds he, in the Point of Time and Space, this Author thinks their *Ideata* to be *finite things*, and yet he owns that we necessarily conceive them to be *infinite*, or to be incapable of any assignable *Bounds*, which is a Difficulty I would desire him to solve. ”

I ANSWER by denying both these Propositions. We are neither obliged to conceive these things to be *infinite*, nor do we maintain that they have *finite Ideata*. We don't think that they have any proper *Ideata at all*, and for that only Reason judge them to be boundless.^p They took their Original perhaps from finite things (which things this Author will always mistake for their *Ideata*) but as they are now view'd by the Mind, and denoted by the Names of Space and Time, they are mere abstract Notions, which have no particular Relation to the external things that at first occasion'd them, or to any others ; and therefore can be bounded only by the Mind itself : But the Mind always finds in itself the same Power of adding one of these Ideas to another, and so we term them *infinite* ; improperly ascribing that Infinity to *them*, which is merely a Power in *us*, and which we may apply to any other Ideas that consist of distinct Parts, and may make them infinite in the same Sense ; nay must make them equally so, if we consider them equally, as has been often observ'd.

^o Pag. 83.

^p See above, p. 30, 31.



THE Case in short is this: Though our Ideas are *finite*, yet there is in the Mind an *ideal Infinity*, made by itself, by its Power of enlarging, combining, &c. We understand what we mean when we say *boundless* and *endless*, tho' Imagination cannot reach farther than what is limited. But the *positive* Idea of a great deal, and the *negative* one of *no Bounds* put together, make up our *ideal Infinity*. Thus, partly by *Imagination*, and partly by *Intellect*, we piece up an imperfect Idea, the best we can have in such things; and for this very Idea Dr. Clarke and our Author have *imagined* three *objective Realities*, viz. Space, Time, and Number: Being resolved to conceive these not only as *somethings*, without any Reason, but as *somethings very large*; and, when *Imagination* fails, to *understand* them actually *boundless*, and last of all from the Idea of *Boundlessness* to rise to a *positive Infinite* and believe them to be incapable of *Increase*, which is an Idea directly opposite to the former: But they will apply both these kinds of infinite to the same Subjects, and so are obliged perpetually to double between them, and take sometimes the one, sometimes the other, as they have occasion for either, to get rid of a present Difficulty.

THIS seems to be a sufficient Account of the necessary Infinity of Space, Time, and Number, and if it does not satisfy Mr. Jackson, I must refer him to the ingenious Author cited in the following Page, who has effectually confuted the Notion of an absolute Infinite in these things, tho' he seems defective in his Account of the true positive one, or of that *Perfection* which, and which only, I apprehend ought to be ascribed to God, and will be consider'd hereafter.

Mr. Jackson's fourth Consequence is as extraordinary as any of the foregoing, viz. Because

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Space and Time are not *Ideas*, but of a Nature as different from our Ideas as finite is from infinite, or in other Words are impossible *in Idea*, therefore they are, not as another would be apt to infer, *impossible in themselves* or *absolutely so*; but quite contrary, they are *real*: Which at most is concluding a thing to be real, purely because 'tis inconceivable; or alledging *Incomprehensibility* for one of its Properties (as the same Author has done under his third Argument) and thence deducing its Reality. The Reverse of all this, I think, would follow much better from his Medium, and the Argument might stand thus. If Space and Time exist at all, then they must be infinite, but they cannot be infinite, even in *Idea*; therefore they do not exist. Here nothing would be denied but the Minor, which our Author is ready to make good by shewing that *no Idea* can be infinite, and therefore that we cannot have an *Idea* of these as such. If he has not made good both Parts of the foregoing Argument, and thereby confuted himself effectually, there are two Authors in the Margin ready to do it for him.¹

BUT

¹ " Reason will assure us that since any assignable Portion of
 " Quantity hath certain particular Dimensions, by consequence,
 " an absolutely infinite or immense Quantity or Extension (if
 " really existent) must actually contain infinite distinguishable
 " Dimensions, or such a Number as, by reason of its Vastness,
 " absolutely excludes the very Possibility of the least Addition
 " and Increase. But 'tis humbly conceived that such an abso-
 " lutely infinite number is a pure Impossibility. For after Mil-
 " lions of Ages spent in adding Millions of Millions together,
 " 'tis evident that the Number will be no less finite than it
 " was at the first, and so there will still be the same Possibility
 " of adding on, and increasing for ever. If any Man will deny
 " this, he ought to assign a Reason why after having arrived at
 " any particular number it should become a Contradiction for it
 " to increase rather than before.

" Thus

BUT fifthly, Supposing (not allowing) Space and Time to be *real*, yet why must they be *Attributes*? I am sure our commonly received Notions and Descriptions of them represent them otherwise. We conceive *Space*, in particular, and treat of it as a *Substance*. We imagine it to subsist of itself, and to want nothing for its Support: We also cloath it with several Properties, as Height, Depth, &c. which would be all over absurd if it were only a Property. They could not be applied to it were it no more than bare *Extension* (which yet is the only Sense it can serve in as a Property) as we have already intimated, p. 21. and may more fully appear from the Author there refer'd to.

2dly, WE not only don't in Fact conceive these as Attributes, but it is impossible they should be conceived as such. All Attributes are *particular*, and cannot *migrare de subiecto in subiectum*, as Logicians speak, or belong equally to different Sub-

“ Thus the very Method whereby our Minds attain their negative Idea of Infinity (which is by repeated Addition of Numbers without End) serves as a Demonstration of the absolute Impossibility of an absolute Infinity in Nature. [I would rather say, *in all things which consist of Parts*.] “ For if an absolute Infinity of Number is therefore impossible, because 'tis the very Nature of Infinity not to be replete; 'tis manifest that an absolutely infinite Extension of Space must be alike impossible for the same reason.

“ This way of arguing Mr. *Locke* thinks sufficient to evince the absolute Impossibility of a positive Idea of Infinity in our Minds, and it is hard to imagine why it should not equally prove the Impossibility of the *Thing* in Nature. For different Dimensions are as distinguishable in Nature as in our Imaginations. An absolute Infinity of Number if (as he grants) it be contradictory in itself, and therefore impossible in Idea, can't but be equally impossible in Nature. Not that our Ideas are the adequate Measures of Reality; but because what is inconsistent in itself, can't but be impossible both in Idea and Reality.” *Colliber's Impartial Enquiry*, p. 155, 156. See also *Watts's Essays*, p. 44.

jects,

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jects, *i. e.* become *universal*. To conceive a Quality appropriated to some particular Being, or to view it in its *concrete*, is one thing; to take it in general, or in the *abstract*, is the reverse. But *Space* belongs equally to all Subjects extended; 'tis not my Extension, or your's, or that of the World, but it comprehends all particular Extensions, and is confined to none: It bears no more Relation to one thing than another, is not consider'd with or applicable to any concrete, and therefore is, and can be nothing else, but an *abstract Idea*; which indeed both that and Duration are sometimes allowed to be by Dr. Clarke,^r and by our Author himself^r. Space and Time then are *abstract Ideas* we say, not of those other abstract Ideas, Immensity and Eternity (as these two Authors would persuade us) but of particular things which are extended and endure, and of them only. To say that these belong wholly to God, and that his necessary Existence *makes* Time and Space, or that they are *Consequences* of it,^t is to exclude all other things from their particular Shares of each, which have at least an equal Title to them with the Deity. Is it not full as just to affirm that Extension belongs to all Matter, as to make it an individual Property of one immaterial Being? And if Duration be an Attribute of God, is not the Time of Man's Existence as much an Attribute of Man; as much a *Consequence* of his Existence, and equally necessary to it?

Mr. Jackson's Inforcement of the foregoing Argument has been partly consider'd above, where

^r See *Demonstr. Prop. I. §. 1.* and his Answer to the Fifth Letter.

^r *Existence and Unity*, p. 96.

^t *Ibid.* p. 80.



it is shewn that this *necessary Infinity* of Space and Time must resolve into a Power in the Mind of continually repeating those Ideas in an uniform manner, or its never finding any Reason to stop the Account. But he replies, † “It is plainly one
“one thing for the Mind to have and retain the
“Faculty of adding and repeating, and another
“very different thing that it cannot but enlarge
“some particular Ideas *in infinitum*, and that it
“cannot set Bounds to them without a Contra-
“diction. In extending its Idea of other things
“*in infinitum* it is *free and active*, but in these it
“is *passive*.”

I ANSWER, This Necessity of enlarging infinitely means no more than that we find an indefinite Increaseableness of some of our Ideas, or an Impossibility of supposing any End of them ; from whence we justly conclude, that these can never constitute a *Whole*, or belong to any real Existence, which must be conceived as a *Whole*, and therefore is repugnant to all such Ideas: But if we could once suppose an End of these, they would be no longer increaseable, or, which would come to the same, we should then lose our Faculty of adding to them : In this Case if we were not obliged *always to go on*, we should be obliged to *stop*, or if we were ever able to bound these Ideas, we should at the same time be unable to enlarge them any farther. So that these two things are not so *very different* as our Author may imagine.

If it be ask'd, why we cannot set Bounds to those particular Ideas which are measurable by Number ; I should think it sufficient to reply with the same Author above, † that “God hath given

† Pag. 83, 86.

‡ *Existence and Unity*, p. 85.]

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“ the Mind the Faculty of *numbering* and *adding* “ *in infinitum* : ” Though I should not approve of the Reason he assigns, *viz.* “ Because God could, “ if he had so pleased, have made things to exist “ every where. ” I take an *infinite* voluntary *Effect* to imply a Contradiction : But this is what our Author seems very inclinable to believe ; and indeed according to his Scheme he should have said, “ Because God *has* made things to exist every “ where : ” Their actual being every where would have follow’d much better from the Idea of Infinite, as he has managed it, than barely a Possibility of their being so. If this same Idea can prove that real Space is every where, I don’t see why it should not also demonstrate that Matter, Number and all sorts of Quantity, the Parts of which are equally indefinite, should be every where too : By which means we shall have a good deal of ubiquitarian Existences.

FROM what has been said we may see, in like manner, how far the Mind is *passive* in forming its Idea of infinite Space : ’Tis no more passive in this Case than in extending its Idea of all other things which consist of Parts, or are capable of being enlarged or diminished *in infinitum* ; ’tis free in the Premises, or in taking up these Ideas at first, but passive in the Conclusion, *i. e.* when it has once begun, it must always go on with them. ’Tis free in imagining the first Inch of real Space, and adding another to it ; but when it has done this, it must for the same Reason add another, and so on everlastingly. We have seen that this kind of Infinity follows from the Nature of these Ideas, and therefore to ask why we can always add to these and not to others, is the same as to enquire why some Ideas are different from others, and have different Properties.

BUT



BUT it has been also observed that this Infinity is only an Infinity of *the Idea*, and does not prove any thing more ; nay, most probably arises from hence, that there is nothing beside an Idea of pure Intellect in the case ; nothing either in Nature or Imagination to induce us to leave adding : On which account we may indeed give over contemplating these Ideas whenever we please, but so long as we do contemplate them, we must go on enlarging them, and can never find any Reason or external Ground to stop.

BUT I am weary with repeating these things, and shall therefore pass on to his Fifth Argument, which is drawn *ex absurdo*, and proceeds in this manner.

“ IF Space be nothing *real*, there could be no
“ *Motion* ;

“ BECAUSE no Space to move in.”^x

I ANSWER 1. If Space be nothing, then a Body in Motion might move on infinitely, because there is nothing to stop it. For, as our Author has it below, ^y “ Since our Senses inform us that nothing
“ hinders or puts a stop to Motion but the *Solidity*
“ of resisting Beings ; we easily conceive that where
“ there is no *Solidity*, there may be no Resistance
“ to Motion.” Indeed if there be really no *Vacuum*, which both our Author and Mr. *Locke* seem to have confounded with *real Space*, tho’ they be very different Ideas ; ^z or if all were full of the same kind of Matter, it would be hard to conceive any Motion in it, since the several Parts of this *Ple-*

^x Pag. 88.

^y Pag. 89.

^z See Note 6. to *King*, p. 25, &c. 2d Edit.

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BUT as the Author does not here form his Argument from the Impossibility of Motion on any *Resistance* to be met with, in case of no real Space, but rather on the want of something to move *in*, or of some *Medium thro'* which this Motion is to be perform'd : I answer,

2. THE Ideas of Space and Motion are not of themselves necessarily connected ; because Motion does not necessarily require any such Medium. Motion is nothing but the *Change of Situation in Bodies with regard to each other*, and of consequence is all *relative*, as will appear immediately : But is not this Idea compleat without the Notion of a Medium *through* which the Change is to be made ? Is *Space or Extension prerequisite*^a to this mutual Change of Situation in Bodies, or in the several Parts of a Body, which we call Motion, as the *Cause* of it ? This our Author will never assert. Or is it a *Causa sine qua non*, and necessarily connected with the *abstract Idea* of Motion, as that includes some Change of Situation ? No more, surely, than it is with the abstract Idea of *Change* in general, or *Difference of Appearance* in general : All these seem to require no sort of Medium, any more than the *Distance* of two Bodies, or their *not touching* (another Argument of our Author's) requires something to be put *between* them.

IT appears then, I think, that tho' the Idea of Space as a *Vacuum* were requisite to Motion, yet

^a *Existence and Unity*, p. 89.

as a *Medium*, which is our Author's present Argument, it is not. Nay the Supposition of any such real Medium would destroy the Possibility of any Motion at all: See the Margin. ^b But if we will connect Ideas together which have no natural Relation, I must add with the ingenious Author of the Objection, which Mr. *Jackson* here recites, that the Idea of mere *Emptiness*, or Void, is much more conveniently join'd with that of Motion, than that *infinite Fullness of Being* which attends this Author's Notion of Immensity; ^c according to which all things are supposed to move up and down within the Divine Substance, in which Substance at the same time there is supposed to be no possible Vacuity.

Is it not much more easy to conceive how a Substance should move without any other Substance interfering, than how it should move within another Substance infinitely *full*? what Idea soever we fix to that Word. In the last Case we must either suppose these two Substances to have nothing at all to do with each other; (and then why should one of them be said to move *within* the other?) or we shall necessarily be driven into, what is the most inconceivable thing of all, a *Penetration of Dimensions*.

THIS Consequence the learned Objector has fix'd on Mr. *Jackson*, and 'tis what he can never get clear of by his Distinction between things of the same and different *Specific Natures*. ^d For as far as

^b I beg leave here to refer the Reader to *Bayle's Dictionary*, under the Article *Zeno*, Remarks E and F, where he will meet with several curious Arguments which seem to demonstrate the Impossibility of all Motion on our Author's Principles, *i. e.* on Supposition of a real Space or *Extension infinitely divisible*.

^c Pag. 90.

^d *Ibid*.

Ch. I. we conceive any other Substances to be co-extended with, or to occupy Part of the Divine Substance by their particular Extensions, according to his gross Notion of the Divine Omnipresence; so far they will necessarily coincide or be identified with it: Unless he will deny that Extension in the whole, or in part, belongs to any thing beside the Deity, which he seems very much inclined to do; * or, in the last place, will maintain that there are as many different sorts of Extension, or of being long and broad, as there are different kinds of Substances in Heaven and Earth: For a full Answer to which see the ingenious Author of *Dr. Clarke's Notion of Space examined.* †

HIS Seventh Argument shall be considered next, as it is near a-kin to the foregoing, and built on the same Principle.

“ IF Space be *nothing*, it would follow that if
 “ God should move in a straight Line the
 “ whole material World intire, with any Swift-
 “ nefs whatsoever, it would still always con-
 “ tinue in the same Place.”

I ANSWER, with Mr. *Leibnitz*, ‡ That the foregoing Supposition is a *chimerical* and absurd one, since the supposed Motion in this Argument would be really no Motion; it would neither answer the Idea, nor have the Effects of real Motion. The Idea of Motion includes a Change in the Situation of Bodies; but if there were only one Body in Nature, what Change can we conceive to attend

* Pag. 91, 92.

† Pag. 127.

‡ Fourth Letter, p. 99.



it? Or how shall we determine its Situation? Or even imagine it possible to be determin'd? It is now supposed to be in the Center of infinite Space, and when it has moved, according to this Argument, *with any Swiftnefs whatsoever*, it will yet be in the Center (if any such thing can be here supposed as a Center.) Where's the Difference then between its moving and standing still? This same Body is neither going *to* any thing, nor *from* any thing; why then should we say that it is *going* at all?^h This might be sufficient to convince us that the Idea of Motion is purely *relative*, and that when we are trying to turn it into absolute, we make an inconsistent self-contradictory Idea of it. Indeed in Natural Philosophy there's a very just and useful Distinction between absolute and relative Motion; *v. g.* Between that of the Earth, and of the Bodies on it; or that of a Ship, and of the Persons in it: But this can have no Place in Metaphysics, where we are not considering this or that particular Motion, and comparing it with a more general one, which with regard to the others may be term'd absolute; but we contemplate Motion in the abstract, which is always essentially relative, and which will appear to be so in any particular Case. Thus in those two above-mention'd, the Motion of the Ship is relative to the Sea or Shore, that of the Earth to other Planets; and so on, while there is any real Motion left.

^h Totus igitur mundus debet spectari ut stans, sed motus est proprietas partium: Sic v. g. totus exercitus dicitur stare, etsi milites excubias agentes moveantur. Imo totum universum simul transferri, ne quidem concipi potest; tum quia motus totius diversionem & distinctionem partium non semper facit, tum quia universum quod est, locum non invenit quo moveatur. *Chauvin. Lex. Philos.* under the Article *Motus Localis*.

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IF our Author quits the Idea of *absolute Motion*, and endeavours to support his Argument by making the Motion of the whole relative ; *i. e.* to the Parts of infinite Space, through, in, or by which it is supposed to pass : I answer,

2dly, THAT by this means we may indeed preserve the Idea of Motion, but then it will be an *ideal Motion* only, because these Parts of Space are only ideal. Except therefore we prove the real Existence of such Parts, as we conceive this Motion to be made through, antecedently, and by some other Topic than the bare Supposition before us, this Argument will be as mere a *Petitio Principii* as some of the foregoing. It will amount to no more than this : The Parts of Space are *réal* because I can *suppose* such a Motion as will require them to be so ; or, if these Parts of Space are not imagined to be real, then this same Motion of the Universe which we have been imagining, will not be real Motion ; which is supporting one Supposition by another, or rather making two Suppositions without proving either.

THE Case in short is this. Whenever one Body undergoes a Change in respect to the Situation of any others, we conclude there's Motion in some of these Bodies ; and this is *real Motion*. Whenever we suppose it to change its Situation in reference to certain Points of Space, this we may conceive likewise to be Motion, but 'tis *imaginary Motion* ; because these Points are not yet shewn to be more than imaginary ones : But in both Cases the Change, or Motion, is alike *relative* ; and to suppose it *absolute* in the proper metaphysical Sense, would be to suppose a Change without any thing to refer it to, *i. e.* a Change of nothing, or at the same time a Change and no Change.

Dr. Clarke indeed has tried to put a Case where a real Effect would follow from this supposed Motion

tion of the whole World, viz. that things would receive a *Shock* upon the sudden *stopping* of it.¹ This he repeats,² and terms it a *mathematical Argument shewing from real Effects that there may be real Motion, where there is none relative*, and appeals to Sir I. Newton.¹ I answer,

1. *Real or absolute Motion* is allowed in the physical Meaning, as opposed to a particular relative one, as already observed. But this has nothing to do with the metaphysical Sense of these Words, *i. e.* as opposed to all kind of Relation whatsoever; except we will jumble Mathematicks and Metaphysics together, and deduce the same Consequences from Terms applied to both, tho' they convey very different Ideas under them: Which indeed seems to be the true Ground of all Dr. Clarke's false Reasoning on these and some other Subjects. But,

2. TAKING this absolute Motion of the World in the true Sense, why should any other Effect follow from its sudden stopping, than from its Continuance in the former State? Why might not all Bodies upon our Earth, for instance, stop together with it? And if so, this *Shock* would neither be perceiv'd, nor be capable of being perceiv'd; that is, 'twould be the same as no Shock.

3. IF these Bodies began to fly off the Earth upon its stopping, or, in other words, if they *moved* when the Earth *stood still*, this would indeed be real Motion, *i. e.* a Change of Relation between them and the Earth; but this is *relative*, and so far from being strictly an *Effect* of any antecedent absolute Motion, that it could not take place 'till that supposed absolute

¹ Third Reply to Leibnitz, p. 79.

² Pag. 133.

¹ *Mathem. Princ. Def. 8.*

Ch. I. Motion were at an end: This same *Shock* therefore which Dr. *Clarke* makes the End of absolute Motion, is to us the Beginning of real Motion; and all that follows from the Case is only this, *viz.* That there would be a real Effect of Motion, or we might have an Idea of it, as soon as this supposed absolute Motion ceas'd, *i. e.* as soon as any relative Motion commenced, and not before.

WHAT has been said concerning the supposed Motion of the Universe, will hold equally with respect to its *Place*, which is as merely chimerical as the former. I shall borrow a farther Illustration of this from an excellent Writer, to whom I have been often indebted in the Course of these Papers.

PLACE then has two Meanings: First, It signifies *relative Position*, as is evident in every Answer given to the Question *Where*. In *England*, in *Europe*, in the Room, in our System, above, below, between, to the right, to the left, &c. This Sense of the Word *Place*, in which it is stiled *absolute*, is built upon the Supposition of *Space* surrounding and containing every thing, and so it is the *Space* which any thing is conceiv'd to fill up or possess. In this Sense, if the Universe were to move on in a straight Line, it would *change Place* according to the vulgar Conception. But then I must insist upon it, that this supposed *Space* it should leave or take up, is purely imaginary, is nothing at all *ad extra*. When the Universe exists in Space, we really mean no more than this, that we refer it to a certain Standard or Receptacle lodged in our Mind. We have an abstract Idea of such a Capacity, which we apply to it, or rather to our Idea of it; that is, the *ideal* Universe has an *ideal Place* in our Minds, and nothing more. The *real* Universe is in no *Place*. To say that it exists *somewhere*, is no more than to say *it exists*: Or to say that it exists in so much *Space* as is commensurate



menfurate to it, is only to fay that its Bulk is equal to itfelf. ^m

ADMITTING then that the Universe, if *removed*, would change Place in our way of conceiving this Matter, the Question ftill remains whether *Place* be *real* or *imaginary*.

FARTHER, If the Universe fhould pafs out of its prefent *State* into a different *State*, muft we therefore fay that it is in the fame *State*, unlefs *State* be fomething *real*? No, this is only a vulgar way of expreffing that the Universe is *changed*, as the other is, that it is *removed*. And Space is as mere an *Idea*, or *Ens Rationis*, as *State* is.

LASTLY, If it be maintain'd that fetting afide the Confideration of *Place*, yet Motion is fomething real, abfolute and diftinct from *Reft*, and which will be the fame in any one Body fuppoſing all others annihilated; or elfe we muft affirm that a Body moving is not different from one at reft, or that theſe two States are in no wife diſtinguiſhable from each other.

I ANSWER, 'Tis allow'd that the Ideas of Motion and Reft are really diftinct Ideas, and if any thinks he has a clear Idea of the Motion above-mention'd, it may be allowed alfo that this is Motion: But it is fuch as by the Suppoſition has no Relation to real *Place* or *Space*, and therefore can be of no uſe in the prefent Question.

^m See Mr. Locke *H. U. B.* II. Ch. xiii. §. 7, 8, 9, 10. and compare theſe Sections with the following Paſſage of Dr. Clarke's fifth Reply to *Leibnitz*, p. 301. "If Matter was *infinite*, yet "*infinite Space* would no more be an Affection of that infinite "*Body*, than *finite Spaces* are the Affections of *finite Bodies*; but "*in that Caſe the infinite Matter* would be as *finite Bodies* now "*are, in the infinite Space.*" How a thing can be *poſitively infinite*, and yet be contain'd in another, is I muſt confeſs, paſt my comprehension.

Ch. I.



BUT Mr. *Jackson* urges,ⁿ “ If Space is *nothing*,
 “ the Situation and Order of things must always
 “ be the same, because there is nothing to deter-
 “ mine or make the Difference of Order and Si-
 “ tuation.” I answer,

1. THE different Appearance of things to each other will be sufficient to determine this, without supposing any thing extrinsic to them. Their turning different Sides to each other, and altering their apparent Magnitudes, will give us an Idea of their Order and Distance ; nay the Difference of *apparent Magnitude* is in fact that whereby we do get our Notion of different *Distances*, and the only way we have to compute them, as is shewn by a very accurate Writer, who has taken some Pains to trace this Idea.^o Mr. *Leibnitz*’s way of accounting for it may be seen in the Margin.^p

2. IF

ⁿ Pag, 94.

^o See Dr. *Smith*’s Opticks, Book I. Ch. v. Art. 138. p. 49. and Art. 155. p. 58, &c.

^p “ We consider that many things exist at once, and observe
 “ in them a certain *Order* of Co-existence, according to which
 “ the Relation of one thing to another is more or less simple.
 “ This Order is their *Situation* or Distance. When it happens
 “ that one of these co-existent things changes its *Relation* to a
 “ multitude of others, which do not change their Relation among
 “ themselves ; and that another thing, newly come, acquires the
 “ same Relation to the others as the former had ; we then say it
 “ is come into the *Place* of the former : And this Change we
 “ call a *Motion* in that Body wherein is the immediate Cause of
 “ the Change. And tho’ many or even all the co-existent things
 “ should change according to certain known Rules of Direction
 “ and Swiftness, yet one may always determine the Relation
 “ of Situation which every Co-existent acquires with respect to
 “ every other Co-existent ; and even that Relation which any
 “ other Co-existent would have to this, or which this would
 “ have to any other, if it had not changed, or if it had changed
 “ any otherwife. And supposing, or feigning, that among those
 “ Co-



2. IF Space be nothing more than Idea, it is sufficient to answer this Purpose, and our Author might as well argue for the Reality of Price, Weight, &c. because if these were *nothing*, there would be nothing to determine the different Value, or Gravity, &c. of things.

THE Idea of Space is indeed a very convenient Measure set up to determine the Relation of things, and a more general extensive one than most others ; but it is not absolutely necessary, as we have seen ; nor if it were, would this prove its Reality *ad extra*, any more than the Reality of these and some other ideal Measures, such as Number, Quantity, Order, Quality, Station, &c. without which we can hardly tell how to speak or think of things at all ; but yet few are so far gone in the visionary way as to believe them to be real Existences, to be any thing but abstract Notions of our own inventing.

“ Co-existents there is a sufficient Number of them which
 “ have undergone no Change ; then we say that those which
 “ have such a *Relation* to those fixed Existents, as others had to
 “ them before, have now the same *Place* which those others had.
 “ And that which comprehends *all those Places* is called *Space*.
 “ Which shews that in order to have an Idea of *Place*, and con-
 “ sequently of *Space*, it is sufficient to consider these *Relations*,
 “ and the Rules of their Changes, without needing to fancy any
 “ absolute Reality *out of* the things whose Situation we con-
 “ sider,” &c. Fifth Paper, N^o 47. p. 205, &c.

Again, p. 205. “ I observe that the Traces of moveable Bo-
 “ dies which they leave sometimes upon the immoveable ones, on
 “ which they are moved, have given Men occasion to form in
 “ their Imagination such an Idea as if some Trace did still re-
 “ main, even when there is nothing unmoved. But this is a
 “ mere ideal thing, and imports only that *if there was any un-*
 “ *moved thing there, the Trace might be mark'd out upon it.* And
 “ 'tis this Analogy which makes Men fancy *Places, Traces*, and
 “ *Spaces* ; tho' those things consist in the Truth of *Relations*,
 “ and not at all in any absolute Reality.”

Ch. I.



Mr. *Jackson* concludes his Arguments for the Reality of *Space* with the old *Cartesian* Plea against a *Vacuum*, viz.

“ If the *Space* or *Distance* between two Sides
 “ of a Room be nothing, the Sides would join
 “ together, *i. e.* they would not be *distant*,
 “ having nothing between them. ”

WE deny the Consequence, and assign this plain Reason, viz. the Ideas of joining and not joining are really different Ideas, and therefore want nothing to hinder them from coinciding or to make them not the same Idea. However, the Interposition of another Idea will keep up the Distinction between them without any thing more. I mean, if we place a mere *ideal* or imaginary Object betwixt two others, it will prevent our conceiving the two others to coincide or become one, as much as a *real Object* would ; or if we suppose even a bare Possibility of placing any thing between them, it will do the same : so far is it from being necessary that we should conceive the two Sides of a Room to touch whenever we suppose no real thing between them.

BUT this has been consider'd under the Third Argument, and is well handled by the ingenious Author of *Dr. Clarke's Notion of Space examined*,[†] to whom I refer.

Mr. *Jackson* has one Observation more on this Head, viz. “ That *Space* is distinct from the Order and Position of things, because the Idea of it is “ the Idea of *Quantity*, which Order and Situation are not. ”[‡] I answer,

† Pag. 6—17.

‡ Pag. 92.



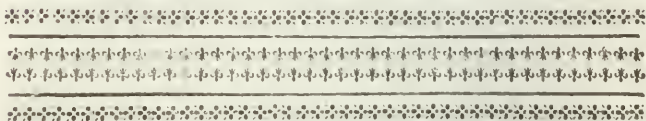
1. SPACE is not properly the Idea of *Quantity*, but of a *Capacity* to receive or admit *Quantity*, or rather any *quantum*; as the Distance betwixt the Earth and Moon is only a Capacity of receiving a Body equal in Length to 60 of the Earth's Semidiameters; tho' if we please we may apply these 60 Semidiameters to the *Distance itself*, and call that, *Quantity* of such a Length: We may likewise affirm that it is *real*; for those two Bodies are *really* so situated with respect to each other, and there's a certain Ground for our conceiving them asunder. But still there's nothing *between* them, no real Substance, Mode, or Property; I mean the Idea of their being so far distant does not require any, as has been shewn above.

2. *Order* is as much *Quantity*, or may have *Quantity* predicated of it with the very same Reason as *Space*: See *Leibnitz's* Reply to this Argument below. ^f

HAVING hitherto endeavoured to shew the Insufficiency of all that Mr. *Jackson* has advanced in Proof of the real Existence of *Space*, both in his general Observations and his seven particular Arguments; I should now proceed, according to the Method laid down, to offer some positive Proof against the Reality of *Space*, but I find it more con-

^f " As for the Objection that *Space* and *Time* are *Quantities*, or rather *things* endowed with *Quantity*, and that *Situation* and *Order* are not so: I answer, that *Order* also has its *Quantity*; there is in it that which goes before, and that which follows; there is *Distance* or *Interval*. *Relative* things have their *Quantity* as well as *absolute* ones. For instance, *Ratio's* or *Proportions* in *Mathematicks* have their *Quantity*, and are measured by *Logarithms*, and yet they are *Relations*. And therefore though *Time* and *Space* consist in *Relations*, yet they have their *Quantity*. " Dr. *Clarke's* Answer to this may easily be retorted with the same Force against *Space* either being or having *Quantity*.

venient to defer this till we have consider'd in like manner all that has been said in defence of Dr. Clarke's Notion of *Time*, *Immensify*, and *Eternity*, which must all stand or fall together with it.



C H A P. II.

Of T I M E.

Ch. II.



W H A T has been said above against the Reality of *Space*, will hold equally against that of *Time*, with regard to its being a *simple* Idea, its *forcing* itself upon us, its having *real* Properties, and being *necessarily infinite*. The only Difference between them is this, that of the two *Space* bids much fairer for Reality, since whatever it be, 'tis conceiv'd as existing *all at once*, whereas no two Parts of *Time* can be supposed to exist together: And to believe the real Existence of a *Thing* or *Whole*, no two *Parts* whereof can be co-existent, must appear extraordinary to one who is not much governed by his Imagination. But having been so large in answer to the several Arguments and Suggestions brought to support the Reality of *Space*, all which Answers are equally applicable and generally applied to *Time* also, I shall dispatch it here more briefly, by first laying down the *Manner* of our acquiring this Idea, from the same excellent Writer who supplied us with the Account of *Space*, and then obviating the few distinct



strict Considerations which Mr. *Jackson* has bestowed upon it.

“ THE Idea of Time is a *common-Receptacle*, as
 “ well as Space : But it is not so easy to trace it
 “ up to its Source, or to shew from what material
 “ things the Idea was at first transferr’d. The
 “ steady Motion of the Sun very probably might
 “ give the first Hint, and furnish the Mind with
 “ the Ideas of *Succession*, *Fluxion*, and *Duration*.
 “ It might be observed that while the Sun performs
 “ his constant Rounds, some things start up and
 “ live, and again sink and die, and still the Sun
 “ continues his Course invariable and independently
 “ of any thing in this lower World. The Idea of
 “ constant flowing or marching, thus got and lodg’d
 “ in the Memory, may be revived in the Imagina-
 “ tion when the Sun is not seen nor thought on,
 “ and applied to an imaginary Subject, called *Time* ;
 “ which shall be conceived to flow uniformly on,
 “ and to take in all Existences whatever. And
 “ this serves for the regulating in our Minds the
 “ orderly Succession of things, and the registering
 “ them in our Memories, every whit as well as if
 “ the Subject were material, and its Course visible
 “ and sensible. Thus Time becomes, in Idea, a
 “ *common Receptacle*, independent of any particu-
 “ lar Existences, and applicable to all. Whatever
 “ ceases to be, this is still conceived to pass regu-
 “ larly on ; and this Idea of *Independency*, joined
 “ with *Infinity*, belonging to it as a *common Measure*,
 “ renders the supposed Infinity *necessary*, in such a
 “ Sense that we cannot but conceive that it has
 “ been and will be always the same. Whether
 “ there be any *real* Existence commensurate to this
 “ Idea, is still as much a Question as ever. If
 “ there be, we have contrived an Idea large enough
 “ to receive it, and take it in ; and the real Du-
 “ ration of that Being will be independent of any
 “ thing

Ch. II. " thing but its Subject, while Time is conceiv'd,
 " is only *imagined* to be so, by a Fiction of the
 " Mind."

Mr. *Jackson* allows that we get the Idea of *Time* from observing the Succession of Ideas in our Minds, or from the Motion of external finite things,^t which comes to the same, since these are only Ideas as contemplated in the Mind: He allows also that it is an *abstract* Idea, and made by abstracting this Succession from these several Ideas or outward things:^v But then his great Difficulty is to conceive how it should become *necessary, infinite, and independent*, when these same Ideas or Things are not so: He concludes therefore that it is not a Property of these things; very true: and therefore that we are under a Necessity of conceiving it to be a Property of some other Thing infinite and independent; quite the contrary. Therefore we are under a Necessity of conceiving it to be, what it really is, and what we ourselves have made it, *viz.* an *abstract Idea*; or we are under a Necessity of abstracting from all Existence at the same time that we consider it. " It is plain, says Mr. *Locke*,^w " that *general and universal* (I add, such as abstract Ideas are) " belong not to the real Existence " of things; but are *the Inventions and Creatures* " of the Understanding, made by it for its own " Use, and concern only Signs, whether Words or " Ideas. Words are general, when used for Signs " of general Ideas, and so are applicable indifferently to many particular things; and Ideas are " general, when they are set up as the Representatives of many particular things: But Universality

^t *Existence and Unity*, p. 51, 54.

^v *Ibid.* both Places.

^w *Hum. Und.* Book III. Ch. iii. §. 11.



“ belongs not to things themselves, which are all
 “ of them particular in their Existence.” ’Tis
 therefore the first and most distinguishing Property
 of an abstract Idea, that it neither has nor can
 have any Ideatum or objective Reality ; and the
 next, that it becomes an *independent* Measure ca-
 pable of receiving the several Particulars from
 whence it was originally collected, without being
 confined to any. * But an Idea which is at once
 both *abstracted* and in the *concrete*, which is sup-
 posed to have one Ideatum from which we receiv’d
 it, and another quite different, to which it belongs,
 is such an Idea as has not been often heard of.

BUT let us see his Objection at full length.
 “ The same Error hath possessed the Author of the
 “ Notes with respect to *Time* or *Duration*. Taking
 “ *accidentally* the Idea of it from Reflection on the
 “ Succession of our own Ideas, or of the Moments
 “ of the Existence of finite things, which may be
 “ supposed not to exist, we are apt to think the
 “ Idea of it, *hence abstracted*, does not prove the
 “ necessary Existence of any thing ; and that the
 “ Idea of Eternity is wholly owing to the Opera-
 “ tion of our own Minds. But---the Existence of
 “ Time or Duration has no necessary Connection
 “ with or Dependence upon the Existence of the
 “ Objects from which we take the Idea of it.--It
 “ is not the Idea of them or their Property. For
 “ whether our Ideas have any Succession at all, or
 “ whether the heavenly Bodies move at all, or any
 “ finite external Objects continue to exist at all,
 “ Duration is the same invariable simple Idea. It
 “ comprehends the Existence of all finite tempo-
 “ rary Beings, but is not comprehended by them :

* See Note 1. to A.Bp. King, p. 6. 2d Edit.

Ch. II. "Duration must have existed *before* them, and
 cannot but exist *after* them." ^y

1. THE Idea of Time is not taken *accidentally* from reflecting on the Succession of our Ideas, or of the successive Existence of finite things, since we could not possibly get it any otherwife; nor can we retain it any longer than while we preserve the Idea of some kind of *Succession*, some *Change* real or imaginary. What Notion could we have of *fore* and *after*, if all things were entirely the same? Or how can we apply *Duration*, any more than *Motion*, to any Being, when there's not the least conceivable Alteration either in himself or others? ^z

THIS Author grants in the next Page, that "Duration can no more be conceiv'd with respect to God, without *actual Succession*, than with respect to the Existence of any other thing:" And whether we can conceive any *actual Succession* before or beside that of *finite changeable* things, shall be farther examined when we come to *Eternity*.

THIS Idea of Time then, as it wholly arises from and is founded on *Succession* of some kind or other, and, as our Author says, is *hence abstracted* by the Mind; it cannot but be owing to the *Operation* of our Minds, and consequently does not prove the Existence of any thing real beside those Successions which first occasion'd it, and that Power of the Mind which afterwards enlarg'd it, and does still preserve it, even when any of its former Objects are removed.

AND therefore, 2. To speak of the Existence of Time or Duration, if any thing more be meant by it than the Existence of the Idea, is taking for granted the very Point in Question. 'Tis also as-

^y Pag. 54.

^z See Notes to King, p. 66, &c. 2d Edit.



serting that it exists in its *Concrete*, in which only it can be supposed to *exist*, at the same time that it is abstracted from it; or that it is an *abstracted* Idea, and yet has a real correspondent *Archetype*, contrary to the very Nature of all abstract Ideas.

3. As this Idea (for I cannot allow it to be any more) is view'd under that Precision which we denote by the Word *Time*, it has indeed, as he asserts, *no necessary Connection with or Dependence upon the Existence of the Objects from which we take it; it is not the Idea of them or of their Property*: True; on the contrary it is conceived by way of *Substance*, or imagined to subsist of itself, *independently and invariably*, as all abstract Ideas are; it is likewise a common *Measure* for all *finite temporary Beings*, as some others are for all things of Value, Weight, Bulk, or Number; and lastly, as a common *Receptacle* it *comprehends* them all, not excepting even the Deity himself, who is generally conceiv'd to exist *in every Part of Time*, as well as *Space*: These I say are both conceived as independent on him (on whom nothing can be really independent) and including him, as well as every thing else, and therefore they are not consider'd either as his *Attributes*, or the Attributes of any particular Being, and therefore can be nothing but mere *abstract Ideas*.

THIS is the Point we have often insisted on, and must still, to the Destruction, as we apprehend, of our Author's whole Cause. If he will endeavour to support it here, and give any tolerable Satisfaction, he has but one of these things to do; either, first, To shew that an *abstract Idea*, in Mr. *Locke's* Sense of that Word, can imply or even admit of any proper *Ideatum*; or, secondly, That those above-mentioned are not the Properties of abstract Ideas, and of consequence that Space and Time may not be such.

Ch. II.



HE adds,^a “ And tho’ *one* Moment of Duration
 “ can but exist at once, yet every present Moment
 “ is an immoveable and inseparable Part of Eter-
 “ nity, and is necessarily connected with the Mo-
 “ ment of Duration *past*, and the Moment *to come*,
 “ without any possible Interruption or Vacuity, and
 “ so Eternity is but *one*.” I answer,

EVERY present Moment may be said to be *im-
 moveable* till ’tis *past*, and then it vanishes and is no
 more : To *connect* this with the Moment preceding,
 which is gone, and the Moment succeeding, which is
 not come, is to connect it with two nothings ; and
 an Eternity made out of this, will be *one* --- What ?
 One *Moment*, if any thing ; for it can never be a
Whole, or one positive compleat Idea, as is already
 proved,^b and will appear more fully below.

Mr. *Jackson* concludes with two Arguments for
 the real Existence of Time, drawn *ex absurdo* in
 the same manner as his two last were for the Re-
 ality of *Space*, and which may therefore receive the
 same Solution. The former stands thus :

“ IF *Time* is *nothing*, then a *Child* is as *old* as
 “ *Methuselah*, the Difference of Age being a
 “ Difference of *nothing*, *i. e.* no Difference.”^c

I ANSWER with the learned Writer often re-
 ferr’d to above,

1. THIS is what we are able to account for on
 our Principles, *viz.* That things may *really differ*,
 tho’ the Difference said to be between them be *no-
 thing real*, be no more than an abstract Idea : But

^a Pag. 55.

^b See Note 10. to *King*, pag. 47. 2d Edition, with the Re-
 ference.

^c Pag. 95.

this is more than Dr. *Clarke* or our Author could do on theirs.

THEY that make Time a *Property* of God, must have a care of making it a *Property* of any thing else. It must adhere to his *Essence*, and be his only. An *universal* Attribute, in any other than a notional Sense, is a Contradiction, as was observed above.

SINCE therefore they have appropriated Time to God, they must answer for it if there be none left either for a Child or *Methuselah*, or if one cannot be shewn to be older than the other. As when they have made *Space* a *Property* of God's Substance, they can no longer say that it is the *Property* of any thing else; so when they have appropriated Time to God, they have discommuned every thing besides. Dr. *Clarke* indeed, after he had appropriated *Space*, contrived *particular Extensions* for Bodies; and so likewise Mr. *Jackson*, after he has made Time the *particular Duration* of God (as he does below) must find out *particular Durations* (let him not call them *Times* for fear of bordering on Blasphemy) for Attributes to every other Being: All which Beings have their individual Continuances, as much as God has his; which Continuances are also as distinct from that of the divine Nature, as their respective Substances are from his: Which one would think sufficient to convince our Author of the Absurdity of making *particular Attributes* of *Universals*, or any *Attributes* of mere *abstract Notions*.

2. THO' Time be only a *general* Notion (and therefore *nothing* real, all real Attributes or Accidents being *particular*, as before observed) yet the *Continuance* of this Child is shorter than *Methuselah's* was, and therefore the Child is not so old as he: Just as the Reason why our Author is not so great as the Archbishop of *Canterbury* is, because his

Ch. II. his *Station* is lower than that of the Archbishop's ;
 and yet 'tis no Consequence that therefore *Continuance* and *Station* are two real things. *Price* is nothing but an abstract *Idea*, and yet it does not follow that a *Shilling* is as valuable as a *Pound*. *Order* is only an abstract *Idea*, and yet it does not follow, that a Prince is not above a Peasant, or that a Difference of *Price* or *Order* is no *Difference*. *Death* is another abstract *Idea*, and yet a *living* and *dead* Man differ. In like manner, tho' *Time* be nothing distinct from the things themselves, yet some things *continue* longer, some shorter. *Time* is *Duration* in the abstract, separate from particular Existences, and conceived as independent of any. *Particular Durations* may be *real*, as indeed they are, as much as any other real Accidents ; and one Person may be as *really* older than another, as he may be *really* fatter or leaner, lighter or heavier. But it remains to be proved that *Time* is a *particular Accident* or *Attribute*, and not a common Standard or Measure made by the Mind. Put *God's Time* instead of *God's Duration*, and observe how oddly the Expression sounds.

Mr. *Jackson's* second Argument for the Reality of *Time* is this :

“ IF *Time* be *nothing*, it would follow, that if
 “ God had created the World *Millions* of
 “ Ages sooner than he did, yet it would not
 “ have been created at all the sooner. ”

I ANSWER briefly, That if God had created the World *Millions* of Ages *sooner*, it would have been really created so much the *sooner* : But the Question is, what is here meant by *sooner* ? As we have form'd an *Idea*, which we call *Duration*, and made it serve as a common Standard or Measure of all particular Continuances, and distinguish'd it
 into



into certain Periods and *Epochs*, which we call *Times*, we can easily conceive these Periods of Duration independently of the periodical Motions which at first occasioned them, or of any particular things which do *endure* ; we can imagine them to subsist of themselves, and to flow regularly on ; to precede or follow each other, to be past or to come, as well to contain the several Beings which we suppose commensurate to them ; and we easily understand what is meant by a thing's being in a *Century* past or to come, being two or three *Olympiads* before or after another. There is a real Distinction in our Ideas, and we can carry on this Distinction *as far as we please*, even where there are no Differences in things to fix it : We can treat of any part of the *Julian Period* before the World began, or of the whole *Annus magnus* : We can add one of these Cycles to another, or place one of them between two others, and so on : By which means we may conceive any of these to be *sooner* or *later*, &c. that is, sooner or later than some others to which we compare them. For it is plain these Words are *relative*, (as well as high, low, near, far off) as indeed all those must be which are applied to *Time*, which is itself a *relative Idea* ;^a
and

^a See *Locke*, B. II. Ch. xiv. " First, *Time* in general is commonly taken for so much of infinite Duration as is measured out by and co-existent with the Existence and Motions of the great Bodies of the Universe, as far as we know any of them." Ch. xv. §. 6. " Secondly, Sometimes the Word *Time* is used in a larger Sense, and is applied to Parts of that infinite Duration, not that were really distinguished and measured out by this real Existence and periodical Motions of these Bodies-----but such Portions too of that infinite uniform Duration, which we, upon any Occasion, do suppose equal to certain Lengths of measur'd Time, and so consider them as bounded and determined." *Ibid.* §. 7. and consequently Time in this Sense is as much *relative*

Ch. II. and yet there is often a real Foundation for our
 conceiving these Relations (as well as for a Difference in Order, Place, &c.) that is, things really are or may be so *related* to each other. But this does not shew that these Relations are of themselves real Substances or Attributes, or any thing different from the things so and so related, as observ'd above. However we understand what is meant by predicating these Relations of things so existing, or Ideas so constituted, and have a clear Notion of sooner and later in any determin'd Parts of *relative Time*, as all this abovemention'd manifestly is. But in *Duration*, where there are no such determinate Parts, or (as it is absurdly call'd) *Time absolute*, which Mr. Jackson here contends for, the Ideas of *sooner* and *later* are quite lost. Because (as the learned Author whom he cites has justly observ'd) there neither is nor can be any thing to refer to; just as the Notion of *higher* and *lower* is lost in the Idea of *Immensify*. For as higher signifies *nearer to the Top*, and lower *nearer to the Bottom*; so sooner, signifies *nearer to the Beginning*, and later, *nearer to the End*; which therefore to apply where there's neither Top nor Bottom, neither Beginning nor End, is Nonsense.

To this, which Mr. Jackson stiles the most plausible Objection that can be offer'd, after some Circumlocution, he comes to reply,* by granting one Part of it, *viz.* "That the Idea of *higher* and *lower* is a mere Relation of finite things, there "being in Reality no such thing, nor possible to

as in the other. See also Ch. xxvi. where he shews that all Words answering to the Question, *How long?* or *When?* are necessarily relative; as also those other Words that ordinarily are thought to stand for positive Ideas; such as *young*, *old*, &c. §. 3, 4.

* Pag. 98.

" be



“ be in absolute infinite Space, yet (adds he) Time
 “ or Eternity (which are not the same, but two very
 different Ideas. See *Locke* above) “ tho’ necessa-
 “ rily infinite (*i. e.* negatively so, or indefinite)
 “ consisting of *successive* Parts of Duration or Con-
 “ tinuance (and consequently incapable of an abso-
 lute Infinity. See an *infinite Series* below) “ we
 “ have very clear and distinct Ideas of *sooner* and
 “ *later*; not indeed with reference to a *Beginning*
 “ or *End*, there being no such marks in it, (which
 yet the whole Objection was founded on, and not
 on the *Co-existence* of their Parts, as he would in-
 sinuate) “ but with reference to any past or suc-
 “ ceeding *Portions*, which we can easily conceive
 “ and assign to determine the Ideas of *sooner* and
 “ *later* by.” *i. e.* If we conceive Time to be *rela-*
tive, and not else; or we may conceive things *rela-*
tively sooner or later, but not absolutely so; which
 is the very thing asserted in the Objection. He
 explains himself farther in the following Page:
 “ That Thing will be really *sooner* or *later* than
 “ another Thing, the beginning of whose Existence
 “ will be *nearer* to or *farther* from the present Mo-
 “ ment of Time; which in both cases is the Mark
 “ to which they are *referred*. *Yesterday* therefore
 “ was really *sooner* than *To-day* and later than the
 “ *Day before*; because the successive Moments of
 “ Time between the beginning of *Yesterday* and the
 “ present Moment, are more than between the
 “ beginning of *To-day* and the present Moment;
 “ and it was *later* than the *Day before*, for the
 “ same Reason that *To-day* is *later* than *Yesterday*:
 “ And *To-morrow* will be *sooner* than the next Day,
 “ because the successive Moments of which it will
 “ consist, are nearer to the present Moment of
 “ Time, than the Moments which will make the
 “ Day following.” All which is taking marks
 from the parts of *relative*, not *absolute Time*, and

Ch. II. seems to be making it all necessarily relative, at the same time that he is labouring to have it conceived otherwise. Nay, these successive Moments, Dr. Clarke would tell him, *are no aliquot or constituent Parts of infinite Time, nor bear any kind of Proportion to it ; nor can be compared at all with it, or be the Foundation of any Argument in any Question concerning it*^f. But it is only from comparing a thing with these portions of Time, that we can conceive it to be *sooner* or *later*, according to our Author ; and therefore, according to the Objection, the very Notions of *sooner* and *later* are lost in Time *absolute*, where there neither are nor can be any such Portions to refer to.

As to the old Notion of the School-men, which he charges upon us^g, viz. a *Punctum stans*, or individual *Instant* ; see the Answer given already from Colliher, in King's Origin, p. 69. 2d Edit. or *An Enquiry into the Nature of the human Soul*, Page the last.

ALL that our Author has advanced farther on this Head is contain'd in a remarkable Period, which he brings to support Both his foregoing general Arguments for the reality of *Time* ; and it is this. " The Idea of the *particular Duration* of " God is the Idea of a *Property* whose Essence consists in a *necessary Succession* of Parts both *from* " and *to* Infinity, which is the true Idea of *Time*. " And 'tis evident this Idea cannot be a *general* " Idea, abstracted from the particular *Continuances* " or *Durations* of sensible Things, which are neither *infinite* or *necessary*. If it was, the Consequence would be, that the Idea of *Time* was the " Idea of a *finite* Thing ; whereas the *Finiteness* of

^f Demonstr. 3 Prop. p. 59. 2d Edit.

^g *Existence and Unity*, p. 100.



“Time is impossible to be conceived. Therefore it must be the abstract Idea of the *Eternity* of a *necessary existing Being*, and so can be only a *Property of God* ^h.” All the Absurdities which we have been examining above seem to be crowded together into this one Paragraph.

1. HE makes *Time* a *Property of God*, his *particular Duration*, and defines it to be a *Succession of Parts* both *from* and *to* Infinity, which is the vulgar Notion of *Eternity*, not of *Time*; at least by this Definition he will find it hard to distinguish it from the former, tho’ he tries to do this afterwards: However the Definition, let it belong to which he pleases, is apparently absurd, since there is no such positive Infinity, *to* or *from* which these Parts can be conceiv’d to move.

2. HE says, Time cannot be a *general Idea*, *abstracted from particular Continuances*, because these are not *infinite*: The very Reason why it may, and without which it could not be abstracted from them. For if they were all infinite, there could be no general Idea made of them, I mean in that respect wherein they were infinite; ’twould be no greater nor in any thing different from each Particular, and consequently would be no *General* at all.

3. *Time*, adds he, *must be the abstract Idea of Eternity*, and so can be only a *Property of God*: Which, beside the last mention’d Absurdity, is also making it an *Abstract*, and at the same time supposing it to be in its *Concrete*. What we conceive in the Abstract can be a Property of nothing; and therefore as this is an *Abstract* of Eternity, which is supposed to be one of the Divine Attributes, it

^h Pag. 96.

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cannot itself be also a Divine Attribute, or what our Author calls the *particular Duration of God*. I'm really not able to account for his calling Time an *abstract Idea* of Eternity, except he means by these Words only a *partial Conception* of it, because Partiality, or *Precision*, as the Logicians term it, is one Property of abstract Ideas: (Tho', even here, 'tis hard to conceive how that which reaches *both from and to Infinity* can be term'd a *partial Conception*.) But then he should have remember'd that they have other Properties also, one of which is *Universality*, or a *Comprehensiveness* of all the Particulars they represent, and consequently they cannot be included in any one Particular, nor be received from a Property as large as themselves; nor consequently can *Time*, or any thing else, be an abstract Idea of *Eternity* in any tolerable Sense. In truth, our Author seems to be in very great Confusion whenever he treats of general *abstract Ideas*; or else is very inclinable to confound them with Particulars, in order to conceal the true Consequence, *viz.* that *Space* and *Time* are only such. The latter Case I am unwilling to suppose.

HE adds, "And the particular Durations of other things can only be, in reality, their *Co-existence* with particular Portions of the Duration of God, whose Existence alone causes Time to exist, and to be just what it is, though no other Being in the World should exist." To this I shall only reply,

1. THAT if *enduring* (as well as being *extended*) be no real Property of other things, I cannot see in what Sense they can be *co-existent* with, or occupy any Portions of God's *Duration* (or *Extension*) were it capable of being distinguish'd into such real Portions.

2. 'TIS equally past my Comprehension how *God's Existence alone causes Time to exist*; how he *makes*



makes Time and Space, as Dr. Clarke and this Author affirm. In the proper Sense of *causing* them, these must either be things distinct from the Divine Nature, or we must suppose the Existence of God to cause his Attributes ; neither of which Mr. Jackson will be willing to allow : As to the metaphorical Sense of causing, viz. their being *Consequences* of the Divine Existence, we have shewn of Time in particular, that it is so far from being *consequent* on God's Existence, that it is absolutely *incompatible* with it, and cannot be apply'd to it without an express Contradiction ; the Idea either of actual or possible *Change* or *Succession* necessarily accompanying all Time, as our Author himself allows ; and *God's sole Existence* as necessarily excluding both ; as will, I fancy, be allow'd by every one else. See more of this in the Remark c. to Note 10. *King's Origin.* p. 66, &c. 2d Edit. ⁱ

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ⁱ To set this whole Matter in a clearer Light, I will beg Leave to insert a Section from Mr. *Leibnitz*, with Dr. *Clarke's* Answer, and the Judgment of a Learned Writer upon it.

" God's Immensity makes him actually present in all Spaces. But now, if God is *in* Space, how can it be said that Space is *in* God, or that it is a Property of God ? We have often heard that a Property is in its Subject ; but we never heard that a Subject is in its Property. In like manner God exists *in* all Time. How then can Time be *in* God ? and how can it be a Property of God ? These are perpetual Allogoslies." *Leibnitz's* 5th Paper, §. 45. p. 195.

" God does not exist *in* Space, and *in* Time ; but *his Existence causes Space and Time*. And when, according to the *Analogy of vulgar Speech*, we say that he exists *in all Space*, and *in all Time* ; the Words mean only that he is *Omnipresent* and *Eternal*, that is, that *boundless Space* and *Time* are necessary *Consequences* of his Existence, and not that Space and Time are Beings distinct from him, and *in* which he exists." Dr. *Clarke's* 5th Reply, p. 303.



' If you desire to know which of *Leibnitz's* Arguments appear
 ' to me to have been but very superficially answer'd by the Doctor,
 ' please to consider Sect. 45, 46. p. 194. Sect. 42. p. 192.
 ' Sect. 49. p. 206. Sect. 50, 51. p. 209. The Doctor in An-
 ' swer to the 45th says, *God does not exist in Space and in Time.*
 ' But certainly according to the common, that is, the true Idea
 ' of Space and Time, he does exist in both. He exists here, and
 ' there, and every where, that is, *in all Space*; and also Yester-
 ' day, and To-day, and for ever, that is, *in all Time.* But the
 ' Doctor adds, that *Space and Time are not Beings distinct from*
 ' *him.* Very right, but they are conceiv'd as if they were; in-
 ' dependent of all Existence, common Receptacles for every
 ' thing. This makes up the Ideas, and at the same time shews,
 ' that they are nothing but Ideas lodged in the Mind. If the
 ' Doctor takes other *Ideas*, he may deal with them as he thinks
 ' fit. But he should not call them *Space and Time*, any more
 ' than he should call *Triangles Squares.* The Doctor says far-
 ' ther, that *Gods Existence causes Space and Time.* That's true
 ' in one Sense: God makes Bees, and Bees make Honey: He
 ' makes Men, and Men make abstract Ideas. As to any other
 ' Sense it is ridiculous. He is as much the Cause of his *Exist-*
 ' *ence*, as he is of his *Immensify or Eternity.* If you say there
 ' could be no such thing as Immensity and Eternity, unless God,
 ' who is supposed immense and eternal, existed, I admit your
 ' Supposition, and it comes to no more than this, That if there be
 ' not an immense and eternal God, there is not any thing im-
 ' mense or eternal. From hence, it seems, the Doctor infers that
 ' *God causes Time and Space*, where he takes for granted what
 ' is manifestly false, that these Ideas are the same with the other,
 ' and then blunders farther, in making Eternity and Immensity
 ' *Consequences* of his Existence; as if they were any thing di-
 ' stinct from him; and as if Immensity and Eternity *in the Ab-*
 ' *stract* were something *real*, as well as in the *Concrete.* With-
 ' out this Supposition (which is apparently absurd) I see not how
 ' they can be properly called *Consequences.* If there exists an
 ' immense and eternal Being, what follows? That there exists
 ' an immense and eternal Being. Immensity and Eternity are
 ' necessary *Consequences* of Immensity and Eternity. This is all
 ' the Sense I can make of it.



C H A P. III.

*Of I M M E N S I T Y and
E T E R N I T Y.*

I TAKE these two Notions together, because Ch. III.
most of the Arguments I shall use against them
are applicable to both. ~~~~~

I HUMBLY apprehend that the *Manner* of the Divine Being ought to be left in its proper *Incomprehensibility*, without determining positively upon it from any of our particular ways of conceiving things; and therefore I should be very unwilling to enter on these two mysterious Subjects, if I were not sensible that the Determinations already made of them by some Writers were not only rash and groundless, but also attended with the worst of Consequences; and, seemingly at least, destructive of the very Point they themselves proposed to establish, namely the Existence of a Divine Being. Now, the only Method, whereby we can come at the Certainty of a first Cause or God, is by shewing the Absurdity of an *infinite Series* of Causes and Effects. Till this is done, each of these Causes may be supposed to have only the same Relation to its particular Effects, as our Parents had to us, and in like manner to cease soon after it has produced

Ch. III.  duced them ; and there will be no one superior to or independent of another ; no first, immutable one to protect or preserve the rest, to supervise and govern them. So that the Supposition of an *Infinite Series* will always lie in our way when we are going to demonstrate the Being of a God : And this is not to be confuted by opposing it either as *one entire Whole which has no Cause within or without itself* ; or *from its having been originally equally possible for none of it to have existed, and so that it must have been all determin'd into Existence by nothing*^a : For its Defenders will answer, that both these Arguments *deny* instead of *confuting* the Supposition. To talk of a *whole Infinite*, say they, is speaking of an Infinite which is bounded and limited by its Parts, *i. e.* which is finite ; for so the Term *Whole* signifies. To the former Argument therefore they reply, that an infinite Series of dependent Beings has no *Whole*, and consequently does not want either an internal or external *Cause* for *all* of it : But as for each Link, That depends upon a Cause external to itself, tho' not to the Series ; and therefore each has its sufficient Cause, *viz.* the preceding one, which determines its Existence in its proper Period. They will allow that 'tis absurd to suppose a *finite* Series of caused Beings without supposing some Agent external to the Series capable of producing it, because the first Link of it would be an Effect without a Cause. But in an *infinite* Series there is no Link without its prior Cause, and no first Cause at all, in which alone the Difficulty lies.

^a See Dr. Clarke's Demonstration, 2d Prop. and Mr. Jackson's Existence and Unity.

IN Answer to the second Argument they will deny, that it ever was equally possible for none of it to have existed, because there always actually were some Causes and Effects, *i. e.* this Supposition implies, that some Beings in the Series existed *ab eterno*, and consequently there never was a Time for that *original Possibility* which those Authors mention. This then is so far from being the only way of confuting an *infinite Series*^b, that it appears to be no way at all. But, as Mr. Jackson seems determin'd to abide by this Method only, I shall present him with a farther Account of its Insufficiency, even upon his own Principles. See the Margin^c.

I f

^b *Existence and Unity*, p. 32.

^c “ Dr. Clarke’s second Proposition is, That there has existed from Eternity some one unchangeable and independent Being; “ If not, it is said, there must have been an infinite Succession “ of changeable and dependent Beings; produced one from another in an endless Progression, without any original Cause at all. Which is absurd. It should have been here subjoin’d; “ Or else, there has been an infinite Succession of changeable and “ dependent Beings, one upon another, join’d and cemented together by a mutual and necessary Dependence of Cause and “ Effect, arising from the fixed and unalterable Laws of their “ Natures, which act one amongst another by certain establish’d “ Rules, and according to which they always did act and ever “ will: That is, there’s a necessary Dependence of one Thing “ upon another, owing to the intrinsic Nature of Things so depending; which Nature of things is necessary and eternal; “ and by which *Necessity* all these dependent Beings upon each “ other are united together into one System. — Or, which is “ the same; there is a Series of Beings dependent upon each other, “ which has a *Necessity* and *Cause*, and therefore a *Reason* of its “ Existence from the Nature of the Things themselves, which “ constitute this Series, and from which *Necessity* of their Nature they obtain that Relation of Dependence upon each other; “ which we observe in them. So that notwithstanding this Proposition and the present Demonstration of it, Atheism stands “ where

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IF therefore we will confute this Series to any purpose, we must encounter it directly, and from its own Nature; or, as Dr. Clarke says, from the Absurdity of it, *consider'd barely and in itself*^a, (in which way the Doctor did not like to meddle with it, for a very good Reason:) And this Absurdity lies wholly in its being an *Infinite* made up of *Parts*, as we shall see presently. But this Absurdity is the same in a Series composed either of co-existent or successive Parts, and consequently both these are to be excluded from the Deity himself, for the very same Reason that we believe a Deity at all. We shall otherwise expose ourselves to the easy Attack of Infidels, who have nothing to do but turn our own Artillery against us, and may reduce us to the same Difficulties when we measure the Divine Being by Time and Space, when, in a shocking manner, we treat of his *Age* and *Extent*, which we charge on their *infinite Matter* or *eternal Generations* of Men.

THESE Absurdities have been explain'd so fully, and made out unanswerably by several eminent Authors, that one might think it sufficient barely to refer to them, as was done in the 3d and 10th *Notes* to A.Bp. King, and the Remarks *b.* and *c.* 2d Edit. To which was added a Specimen of their way of Reasoning on that Head. But, as Mr. Jackson does not seem to enter into the Force of this

"where it did, and the Question still returns, and is not yet solv'd, Whether the Nature of Things is in itself eternal, or whether it is derived from a supreme and intelligent Cause, distinct from it." *Green's Principles of Philosophy*, Book VI. chap. v. p. 763. He carries on the same Argument thro' Dr. Clarke's five following Propositions, and shews that his *original Necessity* may with equal Reason be ascribed to *universal Nature*, as to one *First Cause*.

^a *Demonstr.* p. 19. 2d Edit.

kind of Reasoning, but on the contrary is still of Ch. III.
 Opinion, that an *eternal Creation*, or an *infinite Series* of *dependent* and *mutable created Beings*, neither has nor can be confuted, and undertakes to shew the Possibility of such a Supposition *, I think my self obliged to lay before him one or two of the many Arguments which may be brought against it in every Case, and which are of equal Force, be its Parts successive or simultaneous, dependent or independent. Thus, in an infinite Series of successive Generations, there will be several Infinites that are *Parts* one of another, and by consequence one *greater* than another ; which is an express Contradiction ; since the greater must necessarily bound the less, and exceed its Limits by so much as it is greater than it ; *i. e.* must make it not infinite. Infinite Generations contain an infinitely greater Infinity of particular Men. An infinite Number of Men must have twice as many Hands, and ten-times as many Fingers, and so on. Infinite Time has an Infinity of Ages, these a much greater Infinity of Years, Days, &c. Space likewise has three Dimensions all infinite. Take then an infinite Surface, and it will contain an infinitely greater Infinity of Lines, and these another still greater Infinity of Points. The Case is the same in Number itself, which if you suppose it to contain an absolute Infinity of Thousands, (and you may as well do that as imagine it to comprehend an Infinity of Units) it will contain ten-times as many Hundreds, and these five-times as many Scores, and so on : Nay, all this is only the Indefiniteness of Number, which we in vain attempt to turn into a positive Infinite, and apply it to these several Subjects as was observ'd above.

* *Existence and Unity*, p. 33, 34, 35.

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AGAIN, add one to any of these infinite Series of Generations, Ages, Lines, or Numbers, as you always find you can ; and if they were absolutely infinite before, here's one more than infinite ; if they only become so now, then one Finite added to another makes Infinite : If they are no bigger yet, then one Part added to another adds nothing : All which are Absurdities. The same will appear if we substract a Part from this supposed absolute Infinite, which may be done in any of the fore-mention'd Subjects, as well as in Motion, Magnitude, and every thing which admits of Parts, or may be taken to Pieces by the Mind. The Case is clearer still in Mr. Jackson's Supposition of an *infinite Duration actually past* [†], which must imply an Infinite actually terminated both ways [‡].

NOR is all this to be evaded by denying that these finite Quantities are *aliquot or constituent Parts of these several Infinities, or bear any Proportion to them* : ^h Which is a Solution built on jumbling different Sciences together, and converting what may have a good Meaning in one, to another where it is all over Sophism, as was done in the Case of absolute and relative Motion above. In Mathematicks I take these Maxims to be just, where we consider Infinities not absolutely, or in themselves, but relatively, and with regard to each other only ; *i. e.* they are applied to things which are of disparate kinds, and which bear no proportion to each other : In Metaphysicks I am sure they are wrong applied, to things of the very same Nature, and which must therefore bear a mutual Proportion ; (as one Year,

[†] *Existence and Unity*, p 55.

[‡] See the Authors referr'd to in Note 3. p. 15, 16. 2d Edit. of *King*.

^h *Clarke Demonstr.* p. 17, 18. 2d Edit.

or one Yard, does to another) nay to things which consist one of another, (as a Year of Days, a Yard of Inches) and which are therefore as strictly related to and connected with each other, as the Ideas of a *Whole* and its *Parts*. In this way therefore of conceiving things, 'tis as necessary for an Infinite to include Finites, as for the General to include Particulars.

Infinite Space and *Time*, as far as these Words have any Sense in them, must consist of *finite* Spaces and Times: He that adds a thousand Yards or Years, adds one of each, and so does he that adds infinite: And the great Absurdity of all is in supposing an *absolute* Infinite to be capable of being made by any such Addition, or, which is the same, to belong to any of these Subjects: It will be contained in another Infinite ten times larger than itself, and may be destroyed by the Addition or Subtraction of an Unite, as we have seen.

WHAT has been said I should think sufficient to convince any indifferent Person of the Absurdities of an *infinite Series*, and also of the Weakness of that Pretence, about its *constituent Parts*, which yet is the only one that can be invented for its Support: And if this be not satisfactory to Mr. *Jackson*, he may see a farther Account of it below.ⁱ

Now

ⁱ "Reason will assure us that as an absolute Nothing can bear
 " no Proportion to any real Quantity, so, on the contrary, all real
 " Quantity, how minute soever, must of necessity bear some
 " Proportion to all other Quantity. For this Proportionateness,
 " being founded in the very Nature of Quantity consider'd ab-
 " solutely or in itself, can't possibly be taken away by any mere-
 " ly relative Consideration of Excess or Defect. Wherefore,
 " since we are Witnesses of the actual Existence of a great Va-
 " riety of quantitative Parts, 'twould follow that if the whole
 " was absolutely infinite, these finite Parts would severally bear
 " a Proportion to an absolutely infinite Whole. But if so, then
 " such

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Now all these Absurdities follow from the Nature of an infinite Series, *as such*; from the Repugnancy between the Ideas of *Infinite* and *Series*, or from the Impossibility of an absolute Infinite being composed of those things which we can conceive as distinct from each other, as prior and posterior to one another, and which we must consider successively either in their Extent or Duration: And by consequence the same Absurdities will equally flow from the Infinity of Extension and Duration themselves, as was observed above.

THIS Consequence the Defenders of Dr. Clarke are fully sensible of, and therefore, notwithstanding all the foregoing Difficulties, they are inclined to allow of this *Series* in general, nay they seem to contend for it in an eternal Succession of created Beings, and yet think to avoid the other Conse-

“such an infinite Quantity, by the Subtraction of a single Particulate, would become finite. Consequently the Difference between finite and infinite would consist but in a single quantitative Part, and absolute Infinity would be the Attribute of a certain determin’d Quantity: Than which nothing can be more absurd.

“Some I know have told us that finite Quantities, how great or small, how many or few soever, are not to be consider’d as *aliquot* or constituent Parts of an Infinite, but as mere mathematical Points, which bear no Proportion at all.

“But this is contrary to that Proportionateness which we have observed to be founded in the very Nature of Quantity. And since mathematical Points are mere Nothings, or Creatures of Imagination, ’tis in effect to say we must repute the several Parts of Extension, when considered with respect to the whole, as mere Nothings, divested at once of Extension and Existence. — I say, in general, ’tis to divest Quantity of its very Nature. For, for the same Reason that we deny any conceivable Part of Quantity to be proportionate, we shall be equally obliged to deny all others to be so. Yet such Absurdities we shall be reduced to, if we will not allow the Opinion of an absolutely infinite Extension to be itself an Absurdity.” *Colliber’s Impartial Enquiry*, p. 157, 158.

quence,

quence, viz. of excluding the Existence of a *First Cause*, by asserting with *Dr. Clarke*, that the *whole* of this same Series would have been *originally* unnecessary and without Foundation: Whereas the very Supposition excludes both *Whole* and *Original*, as has been often observed. Let them therefore trust no longer to such an Evasion as any one that had a mind to set up for an Atheist, and understood the true Meaning of an infinite Series, would confute. Let them speak out, and either defend the thing in all Cases, and answer the foregoing direct Arguments drawn from the Nature and Idea of it; or else give it up in all Cases; in eternal Motions, or Productions, or in *Time* itself, as well as in infinite Number, Matter, and *Space*: and own that they are all equally indefensible. By which means we shall at length be led to that true *Infinite* or *PERFECTION*, which belongs to the Properties of an immaterial Being, such as Power, Knowledge, Goodness, &c. which are the only Properties, as I apprehend, that we have good Reason and Authority to ascribe to the Divine Being.^k

THE

^k A full Account of this kind of *Infinite* may be seen in *Cudworth's Intell. Syst.* p. 647, &c. or in the Notes to *A. Bp. King*, p. 15, 99, &c. 2d Edit.

'Tis observable that most of the ancient Philosophers and Divines applied this Infinite only to the Divine Nature, and generally gave it the Name of *Perfection*. See *Colliber's History* of the Word *Infinite*, *Impart. Enqu.* Part I. C. 2. or the Notes to the *Latin Translation* of *Cudworth* by *Moschemius*, p. 174, 175, &c.

Suarez, Tom. II. Disp. 30. p. 36. §. 11. Utrum demonstrari possit Deum esse infinitum.

Finitum & infinitum, teste *Aristotele*, proprie dicuntur in quantitate molis: Cum ergo hæc in Deo non sit, ut supponimus, non potest esse hic sermo de infinito secundum hanc proprietatem, sed secundum eam translationem, qua dixit *Augustinus* 6. de Trin. c. 8. *In his quæ non mole magna sunt, idem est majus esse, quod melius esse.* Vasquez,

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THE same Medium which we made use of to shew the Impossibility of conceiving infinite Space and Time, *viz.* from their consisting of *Parts*; may be applied in Proof of the Incompatibleness of Space and Spirit, or the absolute Inconsistency of Extension and Thought in the same Being. And this is in like manner done to our hands by all those Authors ¹, who have demonstrated that Matter cannot either think of itself, or have Thought in any wise super-added to it; since the very Reason why Matter

Vasquez, Q. VII. Art. iii. Disp. 26. p. 95. Conclusio est non potest esse Infinitum secundum quantitatem, aut magnitudinem continuum.

“ The Truth is, this very Word *Infinite* confounds our Notions of God, and makes the most perfect and excellent Being the most perfectly unknown to us: For infinite is only a negative Term, and signifies that which has no End, no Bounds, no Measure, and therefore no positive and determined Nature, and therefore is nothing: That an *infinite Being*, had not Use and Custom reconciled us to that Expression, would be thought Nonsense and Contradiction, for every real Being has a certain and determin’d Nature, and therefore is not infinite in this Sense, which is so far from being a Perfection, that it signifies nothing real.

“ But, since Custom has made it necessary to use this Word, it is necessary to explain what we mean by it: That an *infinite Being* signifies a Being absolutely perfect, or which has all possible Perfections; which has no other End of its Perfections but Perfection itself: That is a finite imperfect Being that wants any Perfections; that is an infinite Being, not which has no End of its Perfections, but which actually has all Perfections, and can be no more perfect than it is: For there is a Measure of the most absolute, and in this sense infinite Perfections, before which no Being is absolutely perfect, and beyond which there are no new Degrees of Perfection; for if we do not grant this, there can be no Being absolutely perfect.

“ As for instance, infinite Wisdom, Knowledge, Goodness, Justice, Power have fix’d and set Bounds to their Perfections, beyond which they cannot go. Infinite Knowledge and Wisdom knows all that are knowable, and that are wise, &c.”
Sherlock’s Vindication of the Trinity, p. 77, &c.

¹ See many of them referred to in Note 7. to *King*, 2d Edit.
cannot

cannot admit of Thought, is, because 'tis *extended*, or has distinct and distinguishable *Parts*: Which is of the same Force against applying Extension itself to any cogitative Being, or Cogitation to any extended Being, so long as ever we preserve the Idea of Extension, (*i. e.* of *partes extra partes*,) or have any meaning to the Word. Some of their Arguments are to this Effect:

IF Thought result from, or be connected with a material Substance, then either all its Parts contribute their respective Shares of this Thought, or only one; if all of them furnish a Share, and the whole Aggregate of Thought be only the Sum of their respective Portions; then how can it be one single individual Consciousness? Or how come we by that new distinct Species of Thought, which is able to react on and review these several Parts, and compare them together? Can there be any more, or of a different kind in the whole, than there is in all the Parts? And have any one of these Parts by itself a Power of reflecting on itself and others? If not, how comes this new Power to be in the whole or in these Parts taken together? If you say that this Property of reflex Thought does not arise from or inhere in all these Parts, but in some one peculiarly: I ask, Is this one Part itself in like manner divisible? (as you must allow it to be *in infinitum*, or so long as it has Length, Breadth, and Depth.) If it be, the same Consequences will return upon it; if it be not, 'tis no Part of Extension, but something else; *i. e.* a simple unextended Being, which is the thing we contend for.

THESE Absurdities, which necessarily attend the Supposition of thinking Matter, or of superadding Thought to any Substance so long as it is Matter, arise only from its *Extension*, as we have seen, or from its being supposed to consist of *Parts*,

Ch. III. as in the former Case; and therefore they will be the same in all Substances to which this Property is applied, or which are conceiv'd to exist in, and be commensurate to, or co-extended, or co-expanded with the Points of *Space*.^m

NOR will it be of any service here to call these *Continuums*,ⁿ to say their Parts are not *partable* ones, in a *material* or *corporeal* Sense; ^o not *actually* divisible, but only *ideally* so: For even these will equally hinder our conceiving it possible for such an indivisible Quality as Thought is, to inhere in them; these Parts will be equally distinct in the Mind, and as capable of having very different things (tho' not all the different things) predicated of them,^p as those of *Matter* itself, the Difficulties of connecting Thought with which do not arise only from hence, that its Parts are so many *really different, divisible and discernible Beings*, as Dr. Clarke maintains,^q but from the Necessity we find of *conceiving* them as distinct and different in some Respects from each other, which is included in the very Notion of *Parts*, and belongs to all *compound* Beings *as such*. Let them be compounded of Parts homo-

^m See an Argument of Dr. Clarke's applied to the same Purpose in a Reply to Mr. Clarke's Defence of his Letter to Mr. Dodwell, p. 38, 39, &c.

ⁿ See a Confutation of this in Bayle's Dictionary, p. 3079. and Watts's Essays, p. 149.

^o *Existence and Unity*, p. 105, 106.

^p See Bayle's Dictionary, p. 3083, and below. Nay Mr. Jackson in the Close of his Book undertakes to shew that *real* Divisibility is not necessary to the Conception of *Parts* in Matter, which yet I dare say he will not affirm to be therefore capable of Thought.

^q Defence of the Letter to Mr. Dodwell, p. 87. 5th Edit. See a full Answer to it in Dr. Watts's Essays, p. 12, 13.

geneous or heterogeneous, so long as these are Ch. III.
Parts in any Sense of the Word, they cannot sub-
 sist in one another, or be identified; they must be
 conceived as distinct from each other, and have
 distinct Affections: ^r And consequently this Argu-
 ment will hold as strongly against the Cogitation of
 a *long and broad Soul*, as against that of the Body
 which is supposed to contain it.

Dr. Clarke in his Dispute with Mr. Dodwell was
 much pressed with this Consequence, which he terms
a considerable Difficulty. ^r I apprehend it to be

^r “ Thus he (*i. e.* *Spinoza*) is obliged to acknowledge that
 “ Extension and God are but one and the same thing; and, be-
 “ cause he maintains that there is but one Substance in the Uni-
 “ verse, he must needs teach that Extension is a simple Being,
 “ and as much uncompounded as mathematical Points. But
 “ is it not a ridiculous Assertion, and contrary to our most di-
 “ stinct Ideas? Is it more evident that the Number One Thou-
 “ sand is made up of a thousand Units, than ’tis evident that a
 “ Body of a hundred Inches is made up of a hundred Parts really
 “ distinct one from another, each of which has the Extension of
 “ an Inch?

“ It were in vain to raise any Objections against our Imagina-
 “ tion and our Senses: For the most intellectual and the most
 “ immaterial Notions discover to us, with the utmost Evidence,
 “ that there is a most real Distinction between things, one of
 “ which has a Quality which the other has not. The School-men
 “ have been very successful in shewing the Characters and infal-
 “ lible Signs of Distinction: When, say they, one may affirm of
 “ one thing, what cannot be affirmed of the other, they are di-
 “ stinct: Things that may be separated one from another, either
 “ with respect to Time or with respect to Place, are distinct. If
 “ we apply those Characters to the twelve Inches of a Foot of
 “ Extension, we shall find a true Distinction between them. I
 “ can affirm of the fifth, that it is contiguous to the sixth, and
 “ I can deny it of the first and second, &c. I can remove
 “ the sixth into the Place of the twelfth, and therefore it may
 “ be separated from the fifth, &c.” *Bayle’s Dictionary*, Article
Spinoza, p. 2790. See a Passage from the same Author in *King’s*
Origin. p. 28, &c. 2^d Edit.

^r Defence of the Letter, p. 87. 5th Edit.

Ch. III. something more ; at least 'tis such a Difficulty as I believe his Defenders will never be able to get over.

IF then this Notion of *Extension* be too gross, and carry along with it too notorious Marks of Imperfection to be applied to any thinking Being, much less should we presume to attribute it to that most pure and perfect Being, who is without the least Composition of Parts, as well as the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

FROM what has been said, we may in some measure judge of our Author's Notion of the Divine *Immensify*, which is attended with all the fore-mention'd Difficulties and many more. I shall just mention one or two of them.

IF the Divine Substance be infinitely extended, then there will be Part of it in this Place, and Part in that ; one Part will be greater or less than another ; above or below ; to the Right or to the Left of another : It must be commensurate to all particular Beings, and some will occupy more, some less of its Dimensions. By this Account it will be very proper and philosophical to speak of a Yard or a Mile of the Divine Being ; to say that God is not in *Heaven*, but only a *Part* of him ; † and that “ an Elephant or a Mountain, a Whale or a wicked “ Giant, have more of the Essence or Presence of “ God with them than the holiest or best Man in “ the World, unless he be of equal Size. ” ‡ All which are at least very harsh and grating Expressions.

THE *Properties* of the Divine Being must likewise be consider'd in the same manner with his

† See Dr. *Waterland's* First Defence of some Queries, p. 294; first Edit.

‡ *Watts's* Essays, p. 114.

Substance, and we shall have a Piece of his Knowledge, Power, Goodness, &c. in this and that Place, and greater or less than another, in Proportion to the several Parts of his Dimensions, each of which will be equally entitled to its respective share : and this, I think, is a Supposition more harsh, if possible, than the former.

If the Divine Attributes are not to be consider'd by way of Parts ; (which yet belong to them for the very same Reason that they do to the Subject, and must necessarily be applied to both or neither.) If they be said to exist *completely* in every Point of this immense Expansion ; then every Part of this Expanse will be omniscient, omnipotent, &c. by itself, and an Inch of it will have as much Wisdom, Goodness, &c. as a Yard or a Mile ; and instead of one infinite Wisdom, Goodness, &c. we shall have Millions. For as these Parts of the Substance are conceiv'd distinctly, and one individual Part is not another ; so must the *Properties* be likewise, and the individual Power, Knowledge, &c. of one Part will be distinct from that of another * ; and if so, then these distinct Properties must either inhere wholly in every Part, or a Portion of them in each ; we have no other way of conceiving them to inhere at all.

THIS might be sufficient to shew us the Unreasonableness of supposing *unextended* Attributes in a Subject *extended* †, or of applying such Properties to a Substance as not only cannot be proved to have any relation to it, or answer the Idea of Properties when so applied ; but which cannot even be connected with the Substance, or which may be shewn not to belong to it, in any such manner as

* See Dr. *Watts's* Essays, p. 13, &c.

† See Dr. *Waterland*, *ibid.*

Ch. III. other Properties belong to their respective Substances.

I SEE no way of acquitting our selves here, except we declare with Mr. *Jackson*, that these are only Attributes or Properties in such a Sense as *Existence* is an *unextended Property*^a; (which is using the Word in a very large Sense indeed) or answer with Dr. *Clarke*, that these are Properties *sui generis*, and that have a peculiar manner of inhering in their Subjects; which is the shortest way to get clear of all Difficulties.

BUT it is time to come to our Author's Arguments for the Divine OMNIPRESENCE, which he cannot conceive otherwise than by a *local Presence*, or as *co-extended* with the Parts of Matter. "It is agreed, I think, on all hands, that God is
"some way or other *present every where*, or hath
"an *infinite Presence*; whence I conclude, that the
"Existence of Space must be a necessary Consequence of the Existence of his Substance: For if
"God is *present every where*, his *Substance* (without which he cannot be present at all) must exist
"every where, and consequently have an *infinite Expansion*. As God cannot be *present* where
"his Substance is not, so neither can he *act*
"where his Substance is not; nor can his *Attributes*, by which he acts, exist, where he himself
"the Agent, or where his Substance (in which the
"Attributes exist) does not exist.^a" All which might be sufficiently answer'd by asking, *Why not?* Is it necessary that he should act by *Contact*, like Bodies? This our Author will not affirm^b; and if he may act without Contact, why not at any Di-

^a Pag. 108.

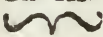
^a *Existence and Unity*, p. 100, 101.

^b Pag. 102.

stance, and without any *local Presence* to the thing on which he acts? Nay, what Idea have we of local Presence without *Contact*, any more than of Contact without *Solidity*? Or in what sense is a *real Presence* necessary where neither of these are required? Our Author allows that even "*Matter*" "does not always act by Contact"^c; Has it therefore a Power of acting where it is not? or does it always act by being *really and substantially* present to the Thing acted on? And how can it be really and substantially present to any Thing, but by the Contiguity of its Parts? When our Author shews us how Matter can either be present to or act upon any Thing without touching it, I will engage to shew him how an immaterial, unextended Being is so too, and may be conceiv'd to act without any Regard to *local Presence*. But to be a little more particular.

1. 'As to the Maxim That nothing can act where
' it is not, all the Truth that is in it (says an ingenious Writer, who was no Enemy to the real
' Existence of Space) is no more than this, That
' there can be no Communication of Action and
' Passion between two Beings, where there is not
' every thing necessary to that Communication.
' But how does this prove God or the Souls of Men
' to be extended, and to exist in Space, because
' Body does? Because Body exists in Space, can
' nothing act on Body, but what exists in Space
' too? This is not self-evident. There is certainly
' something in the Nature of Spirit to make it capable of acting upon Body; but it does not follow
' that that Something must be Existence in Space,
' because Body does so exist. If that Argument
' were good, it would prove more than is intended:

^c Ibid.

Ch. III. ' It would prove that there can be no Communica-
 ' tion but between Substances of the same kind.'

2. THAT which seems to have led our Author into all these Difficulties is, his *running into the Notion of Substance and Accident*^d: The former has been long conceiv'd by way of a *Substratum*, wherein all the several Powers or Qualities of every Being are supposed to *inhere*, which contains and supports them, and consequently beyond which they cannot reach. And these several Powers or Qualities, be they ever so *essential* to the Thing conceived, shall yet be distinguish'd from its real *Essence* by the Name of *Accidents* or Properties; shall be supposed to *stick on*, and be *under-propped*^e by an unknown and unknowable *Substance* or *Substratum*; and accordingly Philosophers are obliged to invent as many of these *Substrata*, as there are particular Beings in Nature, some of them larger, some less, and one immensely large, which is to be the *Basis* of all the Divine Perfections. Now, as this same Substratum, in the very Name and Notion of it, includes some kind of *Extension*, and is used to be apply'd to Beings of all kinds, or of what sort of Qualities soever they consist, the Maintainers of it are led on to affirm, that every Thing which exists is extended, or that Extension is included in the Idea of Being in general, in Being as such: They must apply it to all such Qualities as Power, Knowledge, Goodness, &c. which neither have, nor can be so much as conceiv'd to have the least Relation either to a Substratum, or to Length, Breadth, and Depth: which can neither inhere in or flow from the one, nor (which is much the same) be co-extended, or co-expanded with the other.

^d Locke on *Hum. Und.* Book. II. chap. 13. §. 206

^e Locke, *ibid.*

IN the first Note to A.Bp. King, 2d Edit. I had endeavour'd to shew, that this *Substance* is a mere *abstract Idea*, without any real Foundation in Nature, and just intimated both the Uselessness and ill Consequence of it in Philosophy. I have no occasion to enlarge on this Point since I find it thoroughly discuss'd by Dr. Watts in his second Essay; which I must think our Author is particularly concern'd to answer, tho' he has not yet taken the least notice of the Subject.

3. IF we set aside this scholastic Notion of a *Substratum*, (which should have been proved a little better before so much was built upon it) then there's an end of all the Difficulties either concerning God's *infinite Presence*, or his *Attributes* acting *without* and *beyond their Substance*^f; acting where that is not, or where they themselves are not, &c. For as the Perfections of Knowledge, Power, &c. are allow'd by Mr. Jackson to have "no Parts and no Extension, and must be conceiv'd "to be individually every where^g;" and as Dr. Clarke supposes, that "Extension does not belong "to Thought^h," and that it is improper to say an "Ell or a Mile of Consciousnessⁱ:" So for the same Reason, say we, none of the Powers or Perfections of the Deity have any Relation to an *extended Substance*, in Whole or in Part; they are neither *within* nor *without* it, they neither act *beyond* nor *beside* it; they are present *no-where*, in the Sense of *local Wbereness*^k, or as a Body is pre-

^f *Existence and Unity*, p. 101.

^g *Ibid.* p. 109.

^h Answer to the 2d Letter.

ⁱ Answer to the 6th Letter.

^k See *Watts's Essay* 6. §. 5.

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sent ; but *every where*, to all the Ends and Purposes of a Spiritual Being¹. The Knowledge and Power of God sees and influences every Thing in every Place ; and as these are nothing more than partial Conceptions of his individual Nature or Essence, we must conceive that wherever, and in what manner soever these Perfections are present, (which they cannot be by way of *Extension*, as is allow'd on all hands) there, and in the same manner, and indeed for that very Reason, he *himself* is *really and essentially* present^m, since these several Perfections are what really constitute the *Essence*ⁿ, or, which is the same, make up our *Idea* of it, and give us all the *positive* Conceptions we are able to receive of that adoreable Being, whom we believe to be of *infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness*, as well as *without Body, Parts, or Passions*.

THE Difference then between us and our Author comes at last to this : We allow that " God " is some way or other present every where, " but yet deny his Conclusion, that therefore " God must " have an infinite Expansion. " We think it is too

¹ See *Watt's* Essay, p. 167, &c.

^m *Existence and Unity*, p. 103.

ⁿ " As far as I can judge, all this Talk of the *Essences* of " Things being unknown, is a perfect Mistake : And nothing " seems clearer to me, than that the *Essence* or *Substance* of Mat- " ter consists in Solidity, and that the *Essence* or *Substance* of a " Being, distinct from Matter, must consist in want of Extension, " and is truly defined *an unextended Being*. For nothing " can be conceived to be co-extended with the Parts of Space " (if I may so speak) but what is solid. And therefore to make " immaterial Being extended (as Mr. *Clarke* does) is to make " immaterial Being material ; which indeed is but of a piece " with his making an extended Being indivisible, tho' he has no " other Reason to make all Matter divisible, but because it is " extended. " Answer to Mr. *Clarke's* 3d Defence of his Letter to Mr. *Dodwell*, p. 83.

great Presumption to assign the particular *Mode* of his Existence; such an one especially as is neither agreeable to the Nature of an absolutely perfect Being, nor in the least necessary to the Exercise of any one Perfection which can be proved to belong to him °. We allow him to be *present* (if our Author

° “ Extension is of no use but where there is a Multitude or Diversity of Parts; and such a compound Being can never be absolutely perfect, because it is made of Parts which are not absolutely perfect, as no Part can be; and ten thousand imperfect Parts can never make up an absolutely perfect Being: And if what is infinitely perfect can have no Parts it needs no Extension, and can have none: For what is extended has assignable Parts, whether they can be divided or not. *Omnipresence* is a great and unquestionable Perfection, but to be omnipresent by infinite Extension (if such a thing could be) would be no Perfection at all; for this would be to be present only by Parts, as a Body might be which is infinitely extended; and a Body is as capable of infinite Extension, as any Man can conceive a Spirit to be; and yet if a Spirit be omnipresent, only by infinite Extension, the whole Substance of that Spirit is not present every where, but Part of it in one Place and Part in another, as many Miles distant from each other, as the Places are where such Parts of the omnipresent Spirit are. This all Men will confess to be absurd; and yet if the whole Mind and Spirit be present every where, it is certain it is not present every where by way of Extension; for the whole Extension of an infinitely extended Spirit is not present every where: And, if Omnipresence itself cannot be owing to infinite Extension, no Man can tell me, why an infinite Mind should be extended at all: For Extension itself is no Perfection. Much less do any other Virtues or Qualities of Bodies deserve the Name of absolute Perfections, and therefore we must seek for absolute Perfection only in a Mind; perfect Wisdom, Knowledge, Power, Goodness, Justice, make an absolute perfect Mind; there are no other absolute Perfections but these, and therefore there can be no other absolutely perfect Being but an infinite Mind.” *Sherlock's Vindication of the Trinity*, &c. p. 80.

“ But now, if we could suppose the very Substance of the blessed God to be really long, broad, and deep, and to be actually extended thro’ the whole Universe of Matter, and

Ch. III. thor will insist upon this Term) in the only way
 ~~~~~ that we can conceive a *Spirit* to be present ; in a  
 much more perfect way, as we apprehend, than by  
 being *stretched* or *spread out*, by having his Parts  
*diffused* or *dispersed* every where ; which is the  
 plain English of *Extension* or *Expansion*, and what  
 they really amount to.

IF our Author will have a Name for such sort  
 of Presence, Philosophers and Divines have offer'd  
 several, as Presence by *real Virtue*, *Force*, and  
*Vigour* ; by *Energy*, *Activity*, *substantial Power*,  
*&c.* <sup>P</sup> We had much rather content ourselves with  
 affirming, that it is in a manner purely spiritual  
 and incomprehensible ; neither need we, nor ought  
 we, I think, to go any farther, except we would  
 destroy the essential Difference between Body and  
 Spirit, and make the Deity altogether such an one  
 as ourselves.

WE endeavour to preserve clear Notions of the  
 several Perfections of the Deity, in general, or of  
 the Nature of these Qualities themselves, without  
 attempting to explain the *Manner* how they exist  
 or are united together ; there being, as Mr. *Jack-*  
*son* observes <sup>q</sup>, “ an Incomprehensibleness in the

“ thro’ all imaginary Space, what Advantage would be gain’d  
 “ by it toward the aggrandizing of his own Majesty, or our/  
 “ Ideas of him ? What could he do more by this supposed infi-  
 “ nite Extension of his Substance than to be immediately con-  
 “ scious of all things, and to have an immediate Power and In-  
 “ fluence upon all ; to know all Possibles, and give them Exist-  
 “ ence when he pleases ? And this is as fully and as honour-  
 “ ably attributed to him, in my way of thinking, without any  
 “ of those Inconveniences, and those harsh and absurd Ideas and  
 “ Speeches which arise from attributing Extension with all its  
 “ Consequences to the Great and Blessed God.” *Watts. Essay*  
*vi. p. 169.*

<sup>P</sup> See *Cudworth*, p. 776, 780.

<sup>q</sup> *Existence and Unity*, p. 110.



“Manner of every Thing, about which therefore Ch. III.  
 “no Controversy can or ought to be concerned;”   
 and how Mr. Jackson came to forget this so long,  
 or what he has been doing all the while beside en-  
 deavouring to determine the *Modus* of the Divine  
 Nature, is past my Comprehension. He will not  
 assert that Extension or Inhesion in a Substratum  
 is absolutely necessary to the general Nature or  
 Idea of Wisdom, Goodness, Power, or any other  
 of the Divine Attributes as they are commonly di-  
 stinguished; necessary to *the Things themselves,*  
*and their Reality:*<sup>r</sup> How then come we to be at  
 all concerned either with *Extension* or a *Substra-*  
*tum*? I know no other End of introducing these  
 Terms, but to fix and ascertain the *Modus*. This  
 is what our Author must still be labouring at, whe-  
 ther he perceives it or not; I am sure if he did  
 not appear to me to be doing this, and at the same  
 time pitching upon a very improper and unworthy  
*Modus* both of the Existence and Attributes of God,  
 he would have no Controversy with me about  
 them.

BUT, 2dly, Mr. Jackson can never come into  
 any other Notion of *Omnipresence* than by Exten-  
 sion, because it will lead to the *School Jargon* of  
 “*Totum in Toto, & Totum in qualibet Parte,*”  
 “which is something if possible worse and more  
 “contradictory than *Transubstantiation* itself;”<sup>r</sup>  
 and “which, with respect to the *Substance* of God,  
 “is errant Nonsense. But, adds he,<sup>v</sup> the personal  
 “*Properties* having no *Parts* and no *Extension*,

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<sup>r</sup> Ibid.

<sup>r</sup> Pag. 109.

<sup>r</sup> Pag. 102.

<sup>v</sup> Pag. 109.

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“ must be conceiv’d to be individually every where : ”  
 And what is this but the very *Totum in Toto* which he had been declaiming against? This Principle our Author finds himself obliged to maintain at the same time that he is charging it upon us as one of the greatest Absurdities.

As to the Maxim itself, I have not much to say for it. The Terms *Whole* and *Part* are neither very proper nor intelligible when applied to God ; they are relative Ideas of Number,\* and belong only to finite material Substances, to which alone Number is applicable. If we will transfer them to Beings of another kind, we must understand the Word *Whole* only negatively, as Dr. Cudworth observes,† i. e. as implying that in immaterial Beings there is *not* one *Part* of them beyond another, nearer or farther off than another ; or that they are not at a greater distance from some of the Parts of any material Being on which they act, than from others ; or that they have no Relation at all either to *Division* or *Distance*. If we take the Words in this Meaning, they may serve as well as any others that are entirely borrowed from Sense and Imagination ; that are made not for the World

\* *Whole* and *Part* are perfectly relative : But the positive Ideas, to which they properly and immediately belong, are Extension and Number, of which alone *Whole* and *Part* are Relations. *Locke Hum. Und. B. I. Ch. iv. §. 6.*

† “ Wherefore the Word *ὅλον* in this Form, when it is said that the *whole Deity* is in every *Part* of the World, and the *whole Soul* in every *Part* of the Body, is not to be taken in a positive Sense, for a *Whole consisting of Parts*, one without another ; but in a negative only, for *μὴ μεμελεσμένον*, an *Whole undivided* : So that the Meaning thereof is no more than this, that the *Deity* is not *dividedly* in the World, nor the *Soul dividedly* in the Body, a *Part* here and a *Part* there ; but the *τὸ θεῖον* is *πανταχῇ ὅλον μὴ μεμελεσμένον*, every where, all of it *undividedly*. ” *Cudworth, p. 782.*

of Spirits, but the World of Bodies.\* But as we shall have more of this below, I will dismiss it at present with a Passage from Dr. *Fiddes*, which may be enough to satisfy our Author that there is nothing of Popery in the Doctrine.

“IT is not an express Contradiction that the  
 “ Divine Essence should be whole and entire in  
 “ every Point, and yet but one and the self-same  
 “ Being, without Multiplication, in all Points :  
 “ This way of Reasoning is allowed to hold cer-  
 “ tainly and demonstratively good, with respect to  
 “ corporeal Substance, which consists of distant and  
 “ separable Parts, and therefore it is invincibly  
 “ applied to overthrow the Doctrine of *Transub-*  
 “ *stantiation* : But when it is form’d upon our Ideas  
 “ of incorporeal Substance, which is indivisible,  
 “ without Parts, and, strictly speaking, without any  
 “ intelligible Points, it is altogether inconclusive ;  
 “ as proceeding from an Impropriety of Expression  
 “ which we are necessitated to employ, and not  
 “ from the real Nature of the thing. For that it  
 “ cannot proceed from the Nature of the thing, is  
 “ argued from the Impossibility of conceiving how  
 “ an immaterial Substance should be otherways uni-  
 “ ted to, or co-existent with corporeal Substance,  
 “ than by being all and entire in every Part of it.  
 “ Either immaterial Substance must be whole and  
 “ entire with every Part of the corporeal Substance  
 “ it has an immediate Communication with, or else  
 “ it must only be united to it Part by Part ; so that  
 “ their several Parts shall be equally co-extended.  
 “ But this is to confound the Notion of extended  
 “ and unextended Substance, and to make that di-  
 “ visible, which is confessedly in its own Nature  
 “ indivisible.

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\* See *Watts*. Phil. Ess. p. 163, &c.

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“ And if this Argumentation be just in respect  
 “ of the Soul of Man, as united to his Body, or  
 “ to the principal Parts of his Brain; for the Rea-  
 “ sons hold equally good in both Cases; it will  
 “ still hold with greater Force, in respect to the  
 “ most pure and infinite Being, whose Nature im-  
 “ plies the most perfect Simplicity, and who may be  
 “ said, in the strictest Sense, and without a Figure,  
 “ to be *All in All*. ” <sup>a</sup>

IN the last Place, Mr. *Jackson* alludes to an Ar-  
 gument that had been proposed by a celebrated  
 Writer, and which he says is the greatest Diffi-  
 culty he has met with. I shall beg leave to in-  
 sert it here in full, and then take notice of Mr.  
*Jackson's* Answer.

‘ YOUR Hypothesis supposes that the same self-  
 ‘ existent *Substance* is every where diffused and fills  
 ‘ all things. Now may it not be proper to ask  
 ‘ whether the Substance spoken of be *specifically*  
 ‘ or *numerically* every where the same? Is the Sub-  
 ‘ stance, for Instance, which pervades my Chamber  
 ‘ the same *individual* or *numerical* Substance with  
 ‘ that which penetrates the Sun, Moon, or Stars,  
 ‘ or any thing else whatever? If it be, then the  
 ‘ same *numerical* Substance will be greater and less,  
 ‘ and equal to itself, will contain and be contained  
 ‘ by itself, with a thousand other Absurdities. If  
 ‘ you say it is not *numerically* the same, what can  
 ‘ you call it but *specifick*? And then every Part  
 ‘ of this Substance being an intelligent Part, that  
 ‘ is, an intelligent Being, or Agent, here will be  
 ‘ many intelligent Substances instead of one, and  
 ‘ as many Gods as there are Substances, at least as  
 ‘ many *Persons*, according to your Notion of Per-  
 ‘ son, as there are Parts.

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<sup>a</sup> Theol. Spec. p. 92, 93.



' AGAIN, I ask whether the *Attributes* of that  
 ' Substance which fills my Chamber be the same in-  
 ' dividual numerical *Attributes* of that which pe-  
 ' netrates the Sun, and is commensurate to it?  
 ' You will answer this perhaps in the *negative*. For,  
 ' as it is evident that the *individual* Extension of  
 ' the one is not the Extension of the other, so the  
 ' same Reason seems to hold for any other Property  
 ' or Attribute. And since it is a Principle with  
 ' you, that an Attribute cannot be where the Sub-  
 ' stance, to which it belongs, is not; and since it  
 ' is manifest that the Substance which pervades the  
 ' Sun is not in my Chamber, it evidently follows  
 ' that the Attributes of those two Substances, or  
 ' Parts of one Substance, are not *numerically* the  
 ' same in the strict or proper Sense. Therefore the  
 ' Wisdom, the Power, the Goodness, &c. of the  
 ' one is not *numerically* the same with those of the  
 ' other. Here then arises a Difficulty. Are the  
 ' Attributes of each distinctly *finite* or *infinite*?  
 ' You will not say that the Extension of either is  
 ' infinite, being limited and finite; and therefore  
 ' the other Attributes, consider'd as inhering in par-  
 ' ticular Parts, are also finite; and, since nothing can  
 ' act where it is not, and there is no infinite Power,  
 ' Wisdom, &c. in any Part of this Substance, it seems  
 ' there can be no Act of infinite Power or Wisdom  
 ' any where at all, unless all the Parts contribute  
 ' toward it, that is, unless they act where they  
 ' are not.

' IF you say that every Part can exercise any  
 ' where, or at any time, the Power of the whole;  
 ' then what you deny me of the Substance you'll  
 ' be obliged to grant of every Attribute (which is  
 ' equally strange and unaccountable) that it is *To-*  
 ' *tum in Toto*, and *Totum in qualibet Parte*, and  
 ' so at last we may shake Hands.

Ch. III.



‘ LASTLY, If the Universe be finite, as I suppose  
 ‘ you will allow, it can bear no Proportion to infi-  
 ‘ nite ; but may be consider’d as a mere *Point*  
 ‘ within the infinite Substance which contains it :  
 ‘ And that Part of the Substance which is commensurate to it, is but a Point in comparison to the  
 ‘ Whole. Now either the Strength, Wisdom, &c.  
 ‘ of the Whole is gather’d into this Point, and there-  
 ‘ fore acts where it is ; and then the other Parts  
 ‘ have none left ; or it remains with them ; and then  
 ‘ it either acts not at all, or where it is not. Take  
 ‘ which way you will, I will venture to predict that  
 ‘ you will come to no better or wiser Solution than  
 ‘ the *School-mens Cant of Totum in Toto*, &c. which  
 ‘ you reject with some Scorn.’

Mr. *Jackson* answers this like one resolv’d to answer where there is really nothing to be said. First, he maintains that “ the Parts of the Divine Substance are not *numerically* but specifically the “ same, consider’d as Parts.” <sup>b</sup> In the next Page he affirms, that “ the whole infinitely expanded “ Substance is as much one *individually*, or *numerically*, as if it had no Parts at all, if that was possible to be.” Which I take to be allowing the Argument in express Terms, as well as giving up his former Position. As to the Divine *Attributes* he says, “ Every one is an individual Property of “ the whole Substance, Agent, or Person, and cannot be conceived to exist of Parts at all : ” <sup>c</sup> The same he repeats throughout the four following Pages. Which is just what the learned Objector had told him, *viz.* he is obliged to grant that of every Attribute which he denies us of the Sub-

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<sup>b</sup> Pag. 105.

<sup>c</sup> Pag. 106.

stance, and which, as the same Writer observes, is equally strange and unaccountable. Ch. III.

I SHALL only add an Illustration which Mr. Jackson has given of the Point before us, and which I should think fully sufficient to discover the Weakness of his Cause. <sup>d</sup> "The whole Wisdom, and Power, and Goodness of God, &c. exist every where at once, being not capable of Extension by their Natures; but the whole Substance, which is necessarily expanded, cannot so exist: Just as this individual Moment of Time (which the Objector will allow to be an Attribute of Body) is the same individual Moment in the whole Universe, and cannot be divided, even in Idea, into more individual Moments, even tho' the Substance or Being, to whose Existence it is attributed, was infinitely extended."

I ANSWER, The Objector, I believe, will neither allow Time to be an Attribute of Body, nor this same individual Moment to be a Part of Time. Time is an independent Standard, set up, as we have seen, to measure all changeable Existences whatever, and can be an Attribute of nothing that I know of, except a Clock or a Sun-dial. 'Tis also divisible in infinitum, or so long as it is Time, in the same manner as Extension has distinct Parts so long as it is Extension; and a Moment or Instant is no more a constituent Part of the one, than a mathematical Point is of the other. A Person must be hard press'd before he would bring these for Instances of unextended Attributes in a Subject extended.

FROM what has been said it may appear, that tho' we do not maintain our Author's Notion of local Presence (which in a Being purely immate-

Ch. III. rial is not easy to be understood) nor any such Presence as can be represented to the *Imagination*, (which is indeed the Ground of all the Objections against it<sup>c</sup>) yet we hold such a Presence as belongs to all intellectual Beings, and which may be conceiv'd by our Ideas of *Intellect*; 'tis the actual Influence and Operation of a *Power* on its *Object*, which is all the Presentiality it is capable of, except it were render'd visible or tangible, *i. e.* made something else. 'Tis present, if this Author pleases, to the *Parts* or *Points* of *Extension*, but in such a manner as Beings of different kinds must necessarily be present to each other; and to say that they must all be present in the same way, or else they are *not present in rerum natura*, or *do not exist at all*,<sup>f</sup> is affirming that they must be all of the same kind, or not be at all; for which we might expect some better Proof than a bare Assertion.

It has also no Relation to *greater* or *less*,<sup>g</sup> to *finite* or *infinite*, or any Part of Quantity; and therefore can no more be a *Point* or a *Moment*, an Instant or an Atom, than a Yard or a Year; nor can its Existence be commensurate to, or at all compared with either.

"To conclude; Tho' some, who are far from Atheists, may make themselves merry with that Conceit of *thousands of Spirits dancing at once upon a Needle's Point*; and tho' Atheists may endeavour to *rogue* and *ridicule* all *incorporeal Substance* in that manner; yet does this run upon a clear Mistake of the Hypothesis, and make no-

<sup>c</sup> See *Cudworth*, p. 779.

<sup>f</sup> *Existence and Unity*, p. 102. See a full Answer to this in *Cudworth*, under *Extension and Unity not the same*, p. 779, 780.

<sup>g</sup> *Existence and Unity*, p. 102. See *Cudworth* on *Incorporeals no Points nor Parvities*, p. 777.



“ thing at all against it ; forasmuch as an *unex-* Ch. III.  
 “ *tended* Substance is neither any *Parvitude*, as is  
 “ here supposed (because it hath no Magnitude at  
 “ all) nor hath it any *Place*, or *Site*, or *local Mo-*  
 “ *tion*, properly belonging to it ; and therefore can  
 “ neither dance upon a Needle’s Point, nor any  
 “ where else.” *Cudworth*, c.v. p. 778. See also  
 the Notes to the *Latin* Translation, p. 782, 783.

So much in answer to what our Author has advanced concerning Space and Time, as well as the Divine Immensity and Omnipresence. I had before given my Notion of *Eternity*, as contradistinguish’d from his, in the Notes to A.Bp. *King*,<sup>h</sup> to which, as he has thought fit to make no other Reply beside barely asserting the contrary, and saying that he *cannot at all see the Force of the Reasoning*,<sup>i</sup> I shall make no farther Addition than just to remind him once more, that the Design of it was neither to explain the *Modus* of the Divine Existence, nor to give us an *Idea* or *Imagination* of Duration *unsuccessful*, but only to shew the Possibility of conceiving an *Eternity* in *Intellect*, by joining the Ideas of Stability, Permanency, and Immutability, &c. with that of pure *Existence*, and cutting off all Change, Motion, Succession, &c. from it<sup>k</sup>:  
 which

<sup>h</sup> Remark I. p. 66. 2d Edit.

<sup>i</sup> *Existence and Unity*, p. 55.

<sup>k</sup> I have lately met with the same Sentiments in a very clear Writer, from whom I shall cite a Passage, in hopes that our Author will more easily see the Force of his Reasoning. “ If all  
 “ *created Beings* were taken away, all Possibility of any *Mutation*  
 “ or *Succession of one Thing to another* would appear to be also  
 “ removed. Abstract Succession in Eternity is scarce to be understood. What is it that succeeds? One Minute to another  
 “ perhaps? [*velut unda supervenit undam.*] But when we imagine this, we fancy that the *Minutes* are Things separately existing, which keep on their own Course, tho’ there were no  
 “ Being

Ch. III. which is so far from being only an *unreasonable*  
 ~~~~~ *Prejudice of the School-men*<sup>1</sup>, that it has been re-

“ Being at all existing. This is the common Notion, and yet it
 “ is a *manifest Prejudice*. Time is nothing but the Existence of
 “ created, successive Beings, and Eternity the *necessary Existence*
 “ of the Deity. Therefore if this necessary Being hath no Change
 “ or Succession in his Nature, his Existence must of course be
 “ unsuccessful. We seem to commit a double Oversight in this
 “ Case : First, we find Succession in the *necessary Nature* and
 “ *Existence* of the Deity himself, which is wrong : — And then
 “ we ascribe *this Succession* to Eternity, considered abstractedly
 “ from the *eternal Being*, and suppose it [one knows not what]
 “ a Thing subsisting by itself, and flowing one Minute after an-
 “ other. This is the Work of *pure Imagination*, and contrary to the
 “ *Reality* of Things. Hence the common metaphorical Expres-
 “ sions, “ Time runs apace.” “ Let us lay hold on the present
 “ Minute :” And the like. The Philosophers themselves mis-
 “ lead us by their *Illustrations*. They compare Eternity to the
 “ Motion of a *Point*, running on for ever and making a *traceless*
 “ infinite Line. Here the Point is supposed a *Thing actually sub-*
 “ *sisting*, representing the *present Minute*, and then they ascribe
 “ *Motion* or *Succession* to it ; that is, they ascribe Motion to a
 “ mere Non-entity, to illustrate to us a successive Eternity.
 “ Hence all the Perplexities of a *past Eternity*, made up of *finite*
 “ *successive Parts* : and hence the Contradiction of a *Punctum*
 “ *stans* ; tho’ in this Case a *Punctum stans* is no more a Contra-
 “ diction than a *Punctum movens* : For in truth the *Punctum* is
 “ nothing at all, either to *stand still* or *move forward*. As to the
 “ Expression *nunc stans*, by which some *School-men* have chosen
 “ to describe Eternity ; it certainly implies opposite Ideas if ap-
 “ plied to *our Existence*, or if our manner of Existence be ap-
 “ plied to the *Deity*. For then we make [*nunc*] a relative Term,
 “ which hath a Reference to *past* and *future*. But this is a wrong
 “ Application ; and if once we allow an *all-perfect Mind*, which
 “ hath an eternal, immutable, and infinite Comprehension of *all*
 “ *things, always*, (and allow it we must) the Distinction of *past*
 “ and *future* vanishes with respect to *such a Mind* ; and the Ex-
 “ pression *nunc stans* will appear to have Propriety. In a word,
 “ if we proceed Step by Step, as above, the Eternity or Existence
 “ of the Deity will appear to be, *Vita interminabilis tota simul*
 “ *Et perfecta possessio*, how much soever this may have been reck-
 “ oned a Paradox hitherto.” *Enquiry into the Nature of the hu-*
man Soul, Note the last.

¹ *Existence and Unity*, p. 100.



tain'd by Men of the clearest Heads among the Moderns, Men who have shewn no great Regard to the Schools on other Occasions. I shall mention one or two, and refer to the Note above for ^m an Account of many others.

“ Tho’ we cannot *conceive* (says Mr. *Locke*) any Duration without Succession, nor can put it together in our Thoughts that any Being does now exist To-morrow, or possess at once more than the present Moment of Duration; yet we conceive the eternal Duration of the Almighty, far different from that of Man, or any other finite Being : Because Man comprehends not in his Knowledge or Power all past and future Things, &c.” Mr. *Locke* alludes to the same Notion in the beginning of his Chapter of *Infinity*, and expressly distinguishes the *incomprehensible Infinity of the Great God*, from our *Idea of Infinite* as apply’d to those Things which have Parts, and are capable of Increase or Diminution, such as Space, Duration and Number°.

“ WHAT Relation or Analogy there is between Time (a Flux of Moments) and eternal (unchangeable) Existence; how any Being should be not older now, than he was 5000 years ago, &c. are Speculations attended with insuperable Difficulties. ——— Many Philosophers therefore have thought themselves obliged to deny, that God exists in Time.” *Wollaston*, Relig. Nat. p. 69. Note a.

“ WE should observe, that it is not the Defect of our Imagination, that we cannot conceive an infinite Extension, but Reason tells us, that there

^m *King’s Origin*. p. 69, 72. 2d Edit.

• Book II. chap. 15. §. ult.

• Book II. chap. 17. §. 1.

Ch. III.  "neither is, nor can be any such Extension, but
 "what may be extended farther; now what can-
 "not be, cannot be a real Thing. It is exactly
 "the same Case in Numbers: There neither is
 "nor can be an infinite Number, because there is
 "no Number so great, nor can any Number be
 "so great, but it may be made greater by adding
 "to it; so that Numbers, Extension, and the same
 "may be said of *Time* and *Succeſſion*, are called
 "infinite; not that they have any real and posi-
 "tive Infinity, but because we can add to them
 "without End; which is a Demonſtration that
 "they neither are, nor can be infinite; for what is
 "infinite, is capable of no Additions: And there
 "can be no Number, Extension, or *ſucceſſive Du-*
 "*ration*, but what is capable of infinite Additions,
 "and therefore is at an infinite Diſtance from be-
 "ing infinite." *Sherlock. Vindication of the*
Doctrin of the Trinity, p. 77.

"And though Eternity in a Succeſſion of deter-
 "minate Durations was proved to be impoſſible,
 "yet it is certain that ſomething muſt be eternal,
 "either Matter, or a Being ſuperior to it, that
 "has not a Duration defined by Succeſſion, but is
 "a ſimple Eſſence, and eternally was, is, and ſhall
 "be the ſame. There is nothing contradictory to
 "itſelf in this Notion: It is indeed above our Ca-
 "pacity to form a clear Thought of it, but it is
 "plain it muſt be ſo, and that this is only a De-
 "fect in our Nature and Capacity, that we cannot
 "diſtinctly apprehend that which is ſo far above
 "us." *Burnet*, Art. 1. p. 23. 4th Edit.

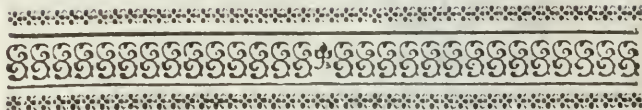
"THE ſame *Objections* have conſtantly lain a-
 "gainſt the *Eternity of the World*; and theſe have
 "been ſtrengthened by ſeveral other *Arguments*
 "drawn from the many *Absurdities* and *Inconſiſt-*
 "*encies* that ſeem to be implied in the Notion of
 "*Eternal Succeſſion*." *Gaſtrel on Religion in ge-*
neral,

neral, p. 66. See also *Stillingsfleet's Vindication of Ch. III. the Trinity*, p. 285. 

NUMBERLESS are the Writers which might be produced to the same purpose ^p, but we shall have occasion to say something more of this under the Head of *necessary Existence*. I proceed therefore to the Arguments already promised against Space and Time, and their Infinity; several of them are indeed interspers'd with the Parts going before, but, as I have met with them collected and put into a Form which adds new Light and Force to the Cause I am engaged in, and as they cannot but be acceptable to all such who have any Inclination to see what may said for it, I shall take the Liberty to lay them entire before the Reader.

^p See a List of them in *Mosheim's* his Latin Translation of *Cudworth*, p. 780. and his own Opinion. p. 782.





C H A P. IV.

Arguments against SPACE and TIME.

Ch. IV. 1. **I**N the first place I maintain, That Space and Time are not Properties or Attributes of any Thing. All things are conceiv'd to exist in Space and Time. But to exist in an Attribute or Property, which must exist in something else, is Nonsense. Space and Time are considered as absolute Things, independent of any thing: But Attributes and Properties depend on their respective Subjects. Farther, if Space and Time be Properties, they are the same with *Extension* and *Continuance*. But it is manifest they are not so conceived. *Space is extended*, and *Time continues*. These are proper Expressions, answering to the common Sense and Reason of Mankind. But to say that *Extension is extended*, and *Continuance continues*, is mere Solecism and Impropriety. What can be the Reason of this, but that the Ideas Men have of Space and Time are very different from what Dr. Clarke supposes? And this sufficiently betrays the Weakness of his Hypothesis.

IF it be pretended that the *Vulgar* only think differently from him in this Particular, that is a Mistake. Propriety of Language is deeper founded than so; and there's no surer Mark, whereby we can discover what Ideas have been affixed to Words by the concurrent Judgment and Joint-consent

consent of Mankind, than by observing what Expressions will bear and pass current in strict Propriety of Speech, and what will not. And I suppose the Doctor, in forming an Argument from the *Ideas* of Time and Space, must take the *Ideas* as they are. For if he takes *other Ideas*, giving them the Names of *Time* and *Space*, then the Argument from the *Ideas* of Time and Space ceases, and becomes no Argument at all.

2. IF it be true in general, that Space and Time are not Attributes of any thing, it must be true in particular, that they are not Attributes of God's Substance. And this is farther manifest from the palpable Impropriety of such Expressions as these : *The Space of God's Substance, and the Time of God.* His *Extension* or *Duration* might sound well enough ; because these two Words denote Attributes or Properties. There may be some Impropriety in the *Thought*, but there's none in the *Expression* ; the Reason whereof is because Extension and Duration are consider'd as Attributes, and refer to some Subject. But *Space* and *Time* are consider'd as absolute Things, independent of any Subject. *Time* and *Space* are not God's Eternity and Immensity, nor Parts of them, but very distinct from them, and therefore can be nothing but *abstract Ideas*.

3. ALL things (according to our way of thinking) are conceived to exist in Space and Time. God himself exists *in all Time*, and is present *to all Space* ; but who ever heard of a Substance existing in one of its Attributes, or of its being present to one of its Properties ? Such a way of speaking is harsh and unintelligible, and is an Affront to the common Sense of Mankind.

4. IF Time exists, it exists *sometime* ; and if Space exists, it exists *somewhere* : Which being ridiculous and not Sense, it is plain that they do not exist, but in Idea only.

Ch. IV.



5. IF *Time* and *Space* exist at all, they exist necessarily, and are *always* and *every-where*. But Yesterday is not, and To-morrow is not. And, since no Part of Time is necessarily existing, the Whole cannot be so: Wherefore Time is nothing *ad extra*, it's an Idea only. As to Space, every Part of it is finite, and confined within certain Bounds; wherefore no part of it is necessarily-existing; wherefore the Whole of it is imaginary only, a Fiction of the Mind.

6. TIME and Space are most easily and naturally accounted for, supposing them to be only partial Conceptions of a Subject, consider'd as having only one Property. Somewhat perpetually flowing or continuing is the Idea of Time. Somewhat extended is the Idea of Space; in like manner as somewhat consider'd only as *solid*, is the Idea of *first Matter*. Any thing thus partially conceived under such Precision and Formality is manifestly an abstract Idea, and nothing more. The other Attributes apply'd to Space are *negative* only. There's nothing positive but *Extension* and its Modes, which confirms our present Supposition.

SINCE therefore Time and Space may be so easily accounted for, and no sound Philosophy will allow us to multiply Entities without occasion, it is very unreasonable to believe, that they are any thing more than Ideas of the Mind.

7. IF Space is a Property, it must have a Substratum or Subject; and that Subject will be extended, solid, divisible, and will have all the Properties of Matter. For, tho' we do not conceive two Surfaces in the Division of the Parts of Space, nor apprehend any Solidity while we consider it as pure Extension, yet if we consider the Subject supposed to fill it, no Reason can be given why it should not be both divisible and solid, as all extended Things (so far as we know) certainly are.

IF

IF you think it proper to apply to the Subject Ch. IV. all the negative Properties of Space, it will not only be indivisible, immoveable, and unresisting, but *unactive* and *unintelligent* too. For Length, Breadth, and Thickness are as far from Action and Thought, as they are from Division into two Surfaces, Motion or Resistance. Chuse you then which way you will, you'll find yourself hamper'd with inextricable Difficulties. I affirm you can give no Reason why the several Parts of the *Substratum* of Space are not divisible, moveable, and impenetrable, figured, &c. like all extended Matter, but what will equally prove that they are without Action, Thought, Will or Understanding. The Result of which is, That your Hypothesis makes God corporeal.

8. IF the Substratum of Space should happen to be solid (and no imaginable Reason can be given why it should not) your Hypothesis not only makes God corporeal, but in consequence makes every Part of the material World a Part of his Substance, (there being no Room for any else) and if this be not an Absurdity great enough, there's another follows on the Back of it; that there can be no Motion where there's no Room to move in.

AN extended Substance must consist of extended Parts, that is, of extended Substances, and will be so much the thicker and denser in proportion to the Number of Parts and their Constipation. A cubick Inch of the Substratum of Space will have a greater Quantity of Substance in it than a cubick Inch of Gold; will be more close and compact, more dense and solid, and can admit of no *Motion*, because it admits of no imaginable *Vacuity*.^p

^p *Existence and Unity*, p. 90.

Ch. IV.

UPON the whole we find, as the Idea of Extension is at first borrowed from Matter, so whenever it is carefully pursued it leads us to Matter again. The *Cartesians* were very right in making *real Extension* and *Matter* equivalent or commensurate one to the other; and their only Mistake was in supposing a real Extension *ad extra*, where there is none.

I HAVE been content, for the sake of Brevity, to omit several good Arguments against our Author's Notion of the Divine Immensity and Omnipresence, such as these;

THAT an extended Substance is really nothing else but *aliud extra aliud*, a multitude or heap of Substances.

THAT one Magnitude cannot swallow up another, nor can there be any Penetration of Dimensions.

THAT every thing extended is also *solid* and *divisible*.

THAT there can be no Activity, Life or Thought, no Intellect, Appetite or Volition in an extended Substance as such.

THAT it is Nonsense to suppose one Part of Life or Thought to inhere in one Part of the Substance, and a Part in another, and therefore the Whole must be *undividedly* both in the *Whole* and in every *Part*.

THESE and the like Considerations have been touch'd upon above, and are well explain'd in Dr. *Cudworth*, who gives us a full Account of the Reasonings *pro* and *con*.

I SHALL transcribe only a Passage or two from him; "By this time we have made it unquestionably evident, that this Opinion of *incorporeal Substance* being *unextended*, *distinct*, and *devoid of Magnitude*, is no novel or recent thing, nor first started in the *scholastick Age*, but that it was the
" general

“ general Persuasion of the most antient and learned Ch. IV.
 “ Assertors of *incorporeal Substance* ; especially that
 “ the *Deity* was not Part of it *here*, and Part of
 “ it *there*, nor the *Substance* thereof *mensurable* by
 “ Yards and Poles, as if there were so much of it
 “ contained in one Room, and so much and no
 “ more in another, according to their several Di-
 “ mensions ; but that the whole *undivided Deity*
 “ was at once in every Part of the World, and
 “ consequently no where *locally*, after the manner
 “ of Bodies.” ^a

IN another Place he says thus :

“ HAD every *twentieth* or *hundredth* Part of
 “ this *Extensum*, not the whole of a *Life* or *Mind*
 “ in it, but only the *twentieth* or *hundredth* Part
 “ thereof, then could none of them have any true
 “ *Life* or *Mind* at all, nor consequently the Whole
 “ have any. Nor indeed is it otherwise conceiv-
 “ able, how a whole Quantity of extended Sub-
 “ stance should be *one Thing*, and have *Persona-*
 “ *lity*, one *I myself* in it all, were there not *one indi-*
 “ *visible Thing* presiding over it, which *held it all*
 “ together, and diffused itself thro’ all. And thus
 “ do we see this WHOLE IN THE WHOLE AND
 “ IN EVERY PART (do Men what they can) will
 “ like a Ghost still haunt them, and follow them
 “ every where. But now it is impossible that one
 “ and the self-same *Substance* should be both *ex-*
 “ *tended* and *unextended* : Wherefore, in this Hy-
 “ pothesis of *extended understanding Spirits* having
 “ one *Part* without another, there is an undiscerned
 “ *Complication* of *two distinct Substances*, *extended*
 “ and *unextended*, *corporeal* and *incorporeal*, both
 “ together, and a *Confusion* of them into one.” ^r

^a Cudworth, p. 776.

^r Id. p. 831.

Ch. IV. HE concludes with great Candour and Moderation, like a wise and good Man, in these Words :

“ It is not our Part here to oppose *Theists*, but
 “ *Atheists* : Wherefore we shall leave these *two*
 “ *sorts* of *Incorporealists* to dispute it out friendly
 “ amongst themselves ; and indeed therefore with
 “ the more *Moderation*, *Equanimity*, and *Tolera-*
 “ *tion* of Dissent mutually, because it seemeth that
 “ some are, in a manner, fatally inclined to think
 “ one way in this Controversy, and some another.
 “ And, whatever the Truth of the Case be, it must
 “ be acknowledged that this latter Hypothesis may
 “ be very useful and serviceable to retain some in
 “ Theism, who can by no means admit of a *Deity*,
 “ or any thing else *unextended*. ” ^f

I SHALL shut up this Head with a Passage of St. *Austin*, who was once inclined to this Hypothesis, but found Reason afterwards to reject it.
Qui didicerit Deum non distendi per locos neque finitos, neque infinitos, quasi in aliqua parte major, in aliqua minor ; sed totum ubique esse præsentem, sicut veritatem, cujus nemo sobrie dicit partem esse in isto loco, & partem in illo, quoniam veritas ubique Deus est. ^g

^f Id. p. 833.

^g Epist. 56.



C H A P. V.

*Of SELF-EXISTENCE and
NECESSARY EXISTENCE.*

MR. JACKSON having used these two Terms promiscuously, I find it necessary to consider them together, but shall dispatch them very briefly; since the learned Author of the DISSERTATION annex'd has obliged us with so full a Confutation of Dr. Clarke's Opinion on the Point. I have therefore only to take notice of what Mr. Jackson offers distinct from Dr. Clarke, or what relates particularly to myself.

Ch. V.
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HE enters on this Subject with stating the Question, and explaining the *Nature and Ground of the Controversy*; in which I cannot but observe some Degree of Art;

1st, IN his representing us as denying, or at least doubting of, the *Unity and absolute Perfection* of the Deity; whereas we profess to believe both, and are only opposing the pretended Demonstration of them *a priori*.

2dly, IN his mixing several indirect Arguments *ex absurdo*,^{*} in Proof of the foregoing Points, with the Demonstration *a priori*, tho' they have no manner of Relation to it, and from which therefore

* *Existence and Unity*, p. 67.

T

that

Ch. V. that Demonstration (which alone we are concerned to oppose) can borrow no Support, how much soever it may appear to want it.

Lastly, IN his pleading so largely for the great Usefulness and Expediency of this same Argument *a priori*, by disparaging all others, and yet being so sparing in his Attempt to shew it to be a true conclusive Argument, which is the chief Part of the Difficulty.

IT may be proper to take some farther notice of the two former Particulars when we come to his distinct Arguments for the *Unity*. The last is sufficiently exposed in the following DISSERTATION. *

THE Argumentative Part of Mr. *Jackson's* Book begins at *Page* 14. Among the several Sorts of abstract Ideas I mentioned mix'd Modes and *Relations*, and under the last Head included Identity and *Necessity*.[†] Mr. *Jackson*, probably for want of a distinct Pointing in the Edition he refers to, happens to mistake the Passage, as if *Necessity* had been brought for one of the Instances of a *mix'd Mode*, and then desires me to tell him of what it is mix'd or compounded. "Has it, says he, any Degrees or Parts in it? Is it not, on the contrary, the most simple, uniform and invariable Idea that can possibly be conceived in the Mind? And being so, it cannot be a mere abstract Idea and Work of the Mind, but must refer to an objective Reality, or Subject *ad extra*, of which it is a real and positive Property."[‡] I answer,

* *Pag.* 67, &c.

† 1. Note to *King*, p. 7. 2d Edit.

‡ *Existence and Unity*, p. 14, 15.

NECESSITY is always *relative*, and as such can be nothing more than an abstract Idea or Work of the Mind : ^a In the present Case it may denote the Relation or Connexion between the *Manner* of the Divine Existence, *i. e.* Uncausedness or Independency, and actual immutable Existence, or an Impossibility of ever beginning or ceasing to be. ^b In which Sense I had term'd it merely *consequential*, and intimated that it arose wholly from the above-mentioned *Negation* of Causality or Dependence in that Being, which is therefore said to exist of itself, or be *self-existent*. From this *Independence* or *Uncausedness* it was also shewn that eternal or immutable Existence might be inferr'd in the same negative way, or from the Absurdity of supposing *such* a Being ever to begin or ever cease existing ; without having recourse to any positive Ground or Reason conceived as the *Cause*, or prior to the Existence itself ; without that *absolute antecedent Necessity* which our Author contends for. ^c

WHAT

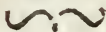
^a See *Locke* above, p. 36.

^b See Note 4. to *King*, 2d Edit.

^c See Note 4. to *King*; and Remark e. 2d Edit.

I have the Pleasure to find this Way of Reasoning confirmed by a very able and judicious Writer. " Wherever there is a *Change* there is a *Cause* of that Change ; otherwise there would be a Beginning without a Cause. The Cause of Change in a Being must be either external or internal. But there can be no external Cause of Change in an independent Being, who exists without Cause ; for then he would be a dependent Being, dependent on other Beings or Things for Powers, Attributes, and Qualities, which had no Cause ; which is a Contradiction.

" And for a Being who exists without Cause to have in himself a Cause of Change, that is, a Cause of not being what he is, is likewise a Contradiction.

Ch. V.


WHAT Mr. *Jackson* has objected to this Method of arguing shall be considered in its Place.

HE proceeds ; “ If Necessity of Existence was “ the *Work of the Mind*, and a mere *Negation*, it “ would be no Contradiction to suppose Nothing or “ no Being necessarily existent, and so the Exist- “ ence of the first Cause would not be *necessary*.” ^a
 I answer,

THO’ *Necessity* of Existence in his Sense of that Word be a mere Fiction of the Mind, and in ours only a Consequence resulting from the negative Idea of Independence, or rather independent Existence ; yet it will be a Contradiction to suppose no eternal Being so long as there are Effects which prove its Existence ; and the Existence of the First Cause will always be *necessary*, necessary to be *supposed*, or consequentially so, in order to account for these Phenomena. It will also be necessary as a First Cause, or that which never had any Original, or Ground of its Existence, and consequently which can never be deprived of Existence by any thing, and consequently which must always be as it is ; ^e
 ’till

“ It follows then, that a Being who exists without Cause, “ must always exist with the same Powers, Attributes, and Qua- “ lities.” *Enquiry into the Evidence of the Christian Religion*, p. 21. 2d Edit.

^d *Existence and Unity*, p. 15. . .

^e “ If Matter [any Being] had no Cause of Existence, it “ must be *self-existent*, or Existence must belong to its Nature ; “ there is no Medium : And if it be self-existent, it must exist “ *necessarily* : A Thing whose Existence is of itself, and belong- “ ing to its Nature, cannot be indifferent to *exist* or *not exist* : And “ if it exists necessarily, it must also be *independent* on any thing “ else for its Existence. So when we suppose Matter uncaused, “ we do as much as if we supposed it *self-existent*, *necessa- “ rily existing*, and *independent* on any thing else for its Ex- “ istence : And whatever Contradiction there is in supposing “ a necessarily existing Being not to exist, the very same there “ will

'till we can suppose an Alteration or Effect without any assignable Cause.

HE adds, "But if it be an evident Contradiction to suppose Nothing or no Being, necessarily existent, or the Existence of the First Cause not to be *necessary*; this *Necessity* of Existence cannot be a Necessity merely *consequential* either to the Supposition of the Existence of other Things, or even to the Existence of the First Cause, merely as such. For though the Existence of other Things implies a First Cause, or a Cause prior to them, yet it does not imply that first Cause to be *necessarily existent* [†].

IN the first place, I ask to what is this an evident Contradiction? There's no Contradiction that we can see but only to *Fact* and the visible Creation; which, as it is an Effect, or once was not, requires a Cause; and as there cannot be an infinite Progress of Causes, we are obliged to suppose a First; which, as such, must be independent of all others, and therefore again necessary in itself [‡]. And thus the Existence of created Things implies, not only a Cause prior to them, but One absolutely first or uncaused, and that First Cause likewise to be necessarily existent.

IT implies all this, I say, not indeed *directly* or *a priori*, which would be repugnant to the Notion of a first Cause; but indirectly and *ex absurdo*; (*i. e.* from the Absurdities of an *infinite Series of Causes and Effects*; and of any *Change* or *Effect* without

[†] "will be in supposing an eternal and uncaused Being not to exist," &c. *Enquiry into the Nature of the human Soul*, p. 342.

[‡] Ibid. p. 15.

[§] See this Point well proved in the *Enquiry into the Nature of the human Soul*, p. 347.

Ch. V. a *Changer* or *Cause*.) It shews his Non-existence to be an exprefs Contradiction, which is the very Definition given of absolute *Necessity*, (and all that is sometimes meant by it;) and the only Difference between us is, that we can point out this Contradiction, which our Adversaries will never be able to do, while they overlook that *a posteriori*, and are seeking for an *immediate* one *antecedent* both to the Supposition of the Existence of created Things, and the Existence of the First Cause itself.

WHAT Mr. Jackson adds here about conceiving an *eternal* and *infinite* Nothing, is deserting his Argument *a priori*, and recurring to a very different one drawn from our Ideas of *Eternity* and *Immenity*, which is consider'd in its Place. See also the Postscript to *King's Origin of Evil*^h.

MR. Jackson next excepts to our making *Independence*, *Self-existence*, or *necessary Existence* (which with him stand all for the same thing) *Negative*. "It is, says he, a Property or Attribute of God; and all Attributes are *real* and *positive* in the Thing or Being, howsoever they may be exprefs'd by *negative* Terms. A *negative* Attribute is in strictness of Speech Nonsense: For whatever Sound Words, by defect of Language, may have, yet, in every negative Word expressing a Property, something positive is always understood." He proceeds to instance in Immensity, Eternity, &c. I answer: Whether Independence, &c. may be call'd *Attributes* or not, (which is a mere verbal Consideration) 'tis plain they are negative both in Name and Notion. They refer to the Question *Whence* God isⁱ, and consequently are no more

^h Pag. 7. 2d. Edit.

ⁱ See Dr. Waterland's 2d Defence of Queries, p. 428, 429st Edit.

than Negations, as he himself is from *none*. 'Tis plain, *Independency*, whether in Idea or Reality, can only be *Independency*; that is, a *Negation* with respect to our Idea, and *Absence* of Dependence in the Thing; unless any will say, that being without a Cause is something as positive as having one. Nay, our Ideas in this Case can never possibly reach beyond what is negative. When we suppose the *Manner* of existing express'd by *Aseity*, or *Independence*, or absolute *Necessity*, to denote any thing farther, we are assigning a *Cause* of the first Cause, and attempting to derive that Existence which is confessedly *underived*. It is not then because we want Ideas, or because we are forced to express Positives negatively, that these are merely negative, but because 'tis contrary to our clearest Ideas to suppose them any thing more; it would imply something above the highest, and antecedent to the first: It would imply that his Existence is derived either from *without*, or from *himself*, or from one of his *Properties*, all which are equally absurd. See Dr. *Waterland*, *ibid*.

BUT tho' *Self-existence*, &c. as far as it relates to the Manner how God is, or the supposed Ground of his Existence, be purely negative, yet it contains *something positive* under it, together with that Negation. The common Idea of *Infinite* is a positive Conception of a great-deal, with the Negation of any Bounds. So *Independence*, *Incorruptibility*, *Immutability*, &c. include the positive Idea of *Existence*, together with the Negation of Dependence, Corruption, or Change. They may likewise be reduced to the positive Ideas of All-sufficiency, Stability, Certainty of Existence or Permanency; or rather these last may be inferred from them; but yet they are not the same Ideas with those, nor are they properly included in them. Those (and many others) as commonly understood,
and

Ch. V. and denoted by the above-mention'd negative Terms, are mere *Negations*; and we have as much ground for predicating such Negations of the Divine Essence, as for attributing to it the above-named positive Qualities. Whether Mr. Jackson will allow them the Titles of *Attributes*, or not, is of small Consequence. Tho' there are Authors who have thought a Negative Attribute no Absurdity, provided we include bare Existence, as afore-said ^k.

ALLOWING then that "Absence of Dependence certainly implies a *positive* Mode or Attribute which is opposite to it ^l, viz. All-sufficiency, Stability, &c." yet this can be of no Service to our Author in his Proof *a priori*, unless he will argue that there is Something all-sufficient, &c. Therefore that Something exists.

BUT he proceeds ^m: "I believe the Author of the *Notes* himself will admit, that if *Necessity* of Existence be a *real internal Property* at all, it must be conceived as *prior* in Order of Idea and Nature-----to the Substance itself of which it is a Property, and as the *Ground* and *Foundation* of the Existence."

Ans. IF Necessity of Existence be any real *internal* Property, properly so call'd, it must be conceiv'd as *posterior* in the Order of Ideas and Nature also to the *Substance itself* of which it is a Pro-

^k *Attributum apud Logicos est quodlibet prædicatum, seu quicquid de re aliqua vere potest enunciari aut affirmari. Vulgo distribuitur in positivum, quod aliquid rei concedit; ut cum animatum dicitur de homine, vitam ei tribuit: vel negativum, quod aliquid a re tollit; ut cum inanimatum dicitur de lapide. That Self-existence can be no more than negative, see Waterland. 2d Defence, ibid. and Pearson on the Creed, Art. 1. p. 43. 2d Edit.*

^l *Existence and Unity. p. 19.*

^m *Ibid.*

perty, and therefore cannot be any Ground or Foundation of its Existence, without manifest Absurdity. All Attributes or Properties, as such, presuppose a Subject in which they inhere, and from which they flow; they are conceiv'd as arising from, and grounded on, the Subject of which they are Properties, (which is the very meaning of that old Distinction between Subject and Attribute, and is Dr. Clarke's way of arguing on other occasions. See his Answer to the 4th Letter) and not that on themⁿ. Who ever heard of a Substance springing from and supported by one of its *Accidents*, or a real *internal* Mode or Quality *prior*, even in Conception, to the Thing whereof it is conceiv'd to be a Mode or Quality, and in which it is included? What is this but confounding both Ideas and Language? Indeed *Necessity* consider'd as *causal*, or as a Principle *extrinsic*, may be antecedent to the Thing of which it is predicated, and *a priori* infer its Existence; but when apply'd to a Being which always actually was, and consequently whose Existence could never admit of any kind of Cause or Antecedency whatever; as is the present Case: When it relates not to the *Why*, or *Wherefore*, but only the *What*; not to the *Original*, but the *Manner* of its Being, and is included in the *Nature of the Thing itself*, (as Dr. Clarke asserts^o) among its other Properties and Perfections: In this Case it, as well as every other Perfection, must (as the same Author allows^p) *presuppose Existence*; it must come after the Subject of which it is predicated, in the natural order of our Ideas; at least it can

ⁿ See the following *Dissertation*, p. 58.

^o Demonstr. 3d Prop.

^p Answer to the 6th Letter.

never precede it in any Sense, either in Idea or
Ch. V. Reality.

‘EXISTENCE, says a very accurate Writer, is
‘prior in Conception to Independency, Immutabi-
‘lity, and the rest of the Attributes, because that
‘expresses barely *Being*, the rest expresses the *Man-*
‘*ner* of it. And the first Question always is, whe-
‘ther a Thing exists; and the Question *How* fol-
‘lows after. *Modal* Being supposes pure Being, as
‘every particular manner of Existence supposes
‘Existence; and that because it includes it, being
‘a farther Addition to it. Existence therefore is
‘prior in Conception to what you call *Necessity*;
‘that is, a *Mode* of Existence, or Complexion of
‘other Attributes, expressing the *Manner* or *Per-*
‘*fection*, of it. And since Existence itself presup-
‘poses and implies a *Subject* existing, it is mani-
‘fest, that the Subject or Substance is first in or-
‘der of Nature, and first in order of Conception,
‘and cannot be conceived otherwise.’

Mr. Jackson adds, “For as nothing can be con-
“ceived prior to absolute *Necessity* of Existence, so
“it is absurd to suppose it in any respect *posterior*
“or *consequent* to any Thing; but it must in the
“Nature of it be conceived to precede every Thing,
“and to be the first and highest Perfection^a.”
Which is an Assertion so perfectly arbitrary and
incapable of Proof, that it may be retorted with
equal Force against this antecedent Necessity itself;
nay, as we apprehend, it will much better suit the
Existence of a first Cause, which, as such, may
properly be said to precede every Thing, and to be
the first and highest Perfection; and which cannot
therefore be supposed to be in any respect posterior
or consequent to any kind of Necessity, Cause,

^a *Existence and Unity*, p. 20.

Ground, or Reason; any Thing, Mode, or Quality whatsoever. The Passage which Mr. *Jackson* here cites from Dr. *Clarke's* Answer to the 7th Letter is fully confuted in the following Dissertation*, to which I refer.

HE subjoins†, “This I think to be Demonstration; and, if the Author of the *Notes* is not satisfied that it is so, he must shew, either that the *First Cause* is not necessarily existent at all; or that he has necessary Existence only because he exists; or that he exists, and cannot but exist, without any Ground or Reason at all of his Existence; which may as well be affirm’d of every Thing, as of the First Cause. This last is certainly a great Absurdity; and nothing, I think, can be more self-evident than that, as Dr. *Clarke* says‡, “Whatever exists has a Cause, a Reason, a Ground of its Existence; a Ground or Reason why it doth exist, rather than not exist.” Lett. 6, &c.

Ans^w. WE allow him to be necessarily Existent in one Sense, i. e. such as can be proved a posteriori, or from the Absurdity of the contrary Supposition; such as is conceiv’d posterior to his actual uncaused Existence and inferred from it, as explain’d above; but not in this Author’s Sense of antecedent Necessity or internal Cause, which we apprehend to be flatly repugnant to the very Nature and Idea of an independent, uncaused Being, or to the Supposition of any First Cause. We say farther, that he is necessarily existent; not only because he exists, but, because he exists in such a

* Pag. 65. 66.

† *Existence and Unity*, p. 21.

‡ *Demonstr.* 2d. Edit. p. 15.

Ch. V. *Manner*, as to make it impossible for him (or rather for *us* to *conceive* him) either to have once begun, or ever to cease existing; *i. e.* independently, or without any, either external or internal, Ground or Cause ^v. Nor can this be *as well affirm'd of every thing as of the First Cause*, except every Thing were alike Eternal and Independent, and by consequence Immutable and All-sufficient ^x.

IN the last place, as to that Position of Dr. Clarke's, than which our Author thinks nothing can be more self-evident; *viz.* 'Whatever exists has a Cause, Reason, &c.' I must think it is so far from being a self-evident Truth, that it is manifestly false, since it appears to be repugnant to the Notion of a First Cause, which is demonstrable ^y.

^v See the Dissert. concerning the Argument *a priori*, p. 65.

^x Dissertation, p. 71.

^y See *Wollaston's* Demonstration of the following Proposition. 'Wherever there is a Subordination of Causes and Effects, there must necessarily be a Cause in Nature prior to the rest, uncaused.' *Rel. Nat. Del.* p. 65, &c.

"Again, *Every Thing must have a Cause*: Though I find it "so set down for one by your Lordship, yet, I humbly conceive it "is not a true Principle of Reason, nor a true Proposition; but "the contrary. The certainty whereof we attain by the Contemplation of our Ideas, and by perceiving that the Idea of "Eternity, and the Idea of the Existence of Something do agree; "and the Idea of Existence from Eternity and of having a Cause "do not agree, or are inconsistent within the same Thing. But "every Thing that has a Beginning must have a Cause, is a true "Principle of Reason, or a Proposition certainly true, which we "come to know by the same way, *i. e.* by contemplating our "Ideas, and perceiving that the Idea of *beginning to be*, is necessarily connected with the Idea of *something operating*, which "we call a Cause, and so the beginning to be is perceived to "agree with the Idea of a Cause, as is express'd in the Proposition." *Locke's* Letter to the Bp. of Worcester, p. 371, Folio; or 134, 8vo.

Nay, it destroys the very Notion it is brought to establish. For if a Cause, Ground, &c. must be found for every thing that exists, in order to fix and preserve it from the Danger of Non-existence, then there's the same Necessity for seeking one for this *internal Cause* or *antecedent Ground* our Author speaks of; and that also, if it be any thing real, will want another real Cause or Ground, and so on infinitely. We shall always be obliged to find a Reason *a priori* for the foregoing, or else, according to our Author's Argument below,² "it must be at least equally possible in Nature that it might not have existed, as have existed, there being no more Reason for its Existence than for its Non-existence."

THIS is a Difficulty which will always return upon us, and as often as it is brought against the *First Cause*, may be retorted against the *antecedent Ground* introduced to support it. For to stop at any such antecedent Ground, and call that the *last* and *highest*,³ is perfectly unreasonable, and contradictory to the whole Tenour of the present Argument. 'Tis what to every one in this way of thinking must appear to be the most arbitrary and unphilosophical Supposition of all, as is observed in the following *Dissertation*, p. 56.

THIS Argument therefore not only proves what it should not prove, but falls short of what it should prove, *viz.* the Certainty and Stability of the First Cause or God. Nay it is so far from fixing and securing it, that it manifestly tends, as far as it has any Tendency, to unfix and render it precarious, as is also shewn in the *Dissertation*, p. 62, 63.

² Pag. 21.

³ *Existence and Unity*, p. 41.

Ch. V. IF his *Existence* had any *Ground*, *Cause*, or *Foundation*, it would be dependent on the *Ground*, and less firm or stable than the *Ground* which supports it, and so would not be the most *perfect* *Existence*: He would not be that self-existent, self-sufficient Being which we suppose, needing no *Ground* or *Support* whatever; and consequently above all kind of *Dependency*, and without all Possibility of *Change* or *ceasing*.^b But more of this when we come to our Author's Question, Why God will exist *to-morrow*?

AFTER he has recited some Passages out of the Notes to A.Bp. King, tending to prove that we can only infer the Existence and Continuance of a First Cause in a negative way, *viz.* from the Absurdity of supposing Effects without a Cause, which must necessarily be the Case if we suppose him either once not to have been, or ever to cease: He proceeds, "Here in Answer I cannot but in the first Place observe, that supposing all that this Author has said to be true, yet his Reasoning no way infers the *Unity* and *Infinity* of the First Cause. If he could prove (*a posteriori*) the Eternity and what he calls *consequential* Necessity of the First Cause without the Supposition of any Ground of the Existence; yet it is certain and evident that if there is no *absolute* Necessity of Existence, which is the *MODE*, *Ground*, *Reason*, or *Foundation* of the Existence of the First Cause; he may as possibly be *finite* as *infinite*; and there may, without any Reason, exist *numberless*, *finite*, *dependent* (tho' necessarily existent) first Causes of like or of different Nature and Substance, as well as that there should exist, without any Reason, one only *infinite*, *independent* First Cause."^c

^b *Dissertation*, p. 70.

^c *Existence and Unity*, p. 23, 24.

Ans. 1. WE don't want to infer the *Unity* and *Infinity* of the First Cause *a priori*, nor do we think they can be so inferr'd: As will be shewn hereafter. But, Ch. V.

2. As to the latter, we apprehend that there is good Proof of it, in our Sense of the Word *infinite*, i. e. as implying *Perfection* in every Attribute from *independent* Existence, which as such excludes all Limitation and Defect; since it is equally repugnant for that which has both its Existence and the manner of its Existence, and every Quality from itself or in its own Nature, either to admit of any Restriction or Limitation of Existence or Attribute from without, or to contain within that same Nature any Principle of Annihilation or Diminution, or of being any thing else but what it always independently or in its own Nature actually was. This Deduction of *Infinity* from *Independence* is, I think, at least as good a one as that from *antecedent Necessity*, were the Notion consistent. But, in truth, our Author himself seems to quit it here, by terming this *absolute Necessity* a *Mode* of the Existence, (which as such is subsequent in Idea to pure Existence^a) and in the same Page, some *Quality, Mode, or Property originally in the Nature of the First Cause*. *Quality, Mode, Property*; all of them in Idea presupposing the Existence of the Thing to which they are attributed, and in reality *included in its Nature*, instead of *originally preceding* it. If our Author will give up all this Antecedency, and stick to a *modal Necessity* subsequent in Order of Conception to independent Existence (of which below) we are ready to close with him, and conclude the Debate; since the *Argument a priori* is then at an end.

^a See the *Dissertation*.

Ch. V.

3. As to the *Unity* I must think it as far from being demonstrable on this Author's Hypothesis, as on ours: For if his Ground of all Existence be without any antecedent Ground, as he contends, why may there not, according to his own way of arguing, exist numberless *Grounds, Causes, Necessities*, without any Reason, as well as one? If any one Ground, Cause, or Necessity subsists without an original Reason, why not a hundred, of like or of different Nature? ^c So that this is not removing any Difficulty, but shifting it a little higher, and making it rather greater than before. But,

Lastly, IF it were possible on our Scheme to suppose *numberless* and *finite* First Causes, yet how these should be *dependent* is perfectly inconceivable. *Dependent* and *First Cause*, or dependent and *necessarily existent*, are to me Ideas as directly opposite as dependent and independent. What can that be dependent on, which neither derives its Existence nor the manner of its Existence from any thing in Nature? Who has every thing that it has necessarily and in itself? ^d

Mr.

^c *Dissertation*, p. 79, 80.

^d " If a *necessary Being* might have the manner of its Existence changed by any *other Being*, it must depend on that other Being for the manner of its Existence: And if it depended on another Being for the *manner* of its Existence, it must depend on that Being for *Existence itself*; since it cannot exist but in *some manner*. Existence taken separately from all manner of Existence is an Impossibility, the Negation of Existence. But it hath been shewn (see a Passage from the same Author above in p. 140.) " that a self-existent Being must be also independent for its Existence, and therefore for the manner of its Existence. Nay, so independent is the manner of necessary Existence that it is even absurd to suppose it to depend on the *necessary Being itself*, or to be determined by it: For it ought to exist before it could determine the manner of its own Existence, and therefore to exist without determining the manner " of

Mr. JACKSON's next Observation is yet of less Moment. s " 2dly, I cannot but observe that the Author of the *Notes*, in some Part of his Arguments, seems to feel the Force of that very *Ground* of Existence inferring itself, even whilst he is opposing it. Why else does he say that *From the Order of Causes we gather that the First Cause must necessarily have been from all Eternity?* How comes the Word *necessarily* in, unless it be to shew the *Reason* or *Ground* of the eternal Existence?"

Ans. It comes in to shew the Absurdity of the contrary Supposition, *a posteriori*, or from Effects without any Cause. It is a *Logical* or *Physical* Necessity, h which is all that we have occasion for in this Place; and was inserted to shew in what Sense that Word might and always should be used on this Occasion.

BUT, if this Author is disposed to be critical, I would desire him to observe farther, that it is not said that the First Cause *must have been necessarily*, but *must necessarily have been*, i. e. *certainly* or

* of its Existence; or to exist in a necessary and independent manner. Or thus. It ought to exist before it could determine the manner of its own Existence, and yet to determine the manner of its Existence before it could exist, since the manner of its Existence is supposed dependent on, and therefore determined by itself: Which is repugnant. In a word, if the manner of necessary Existence were *dependent*, it would be *effected*: And, as we suppose it dependent on another Being, or the necessary Being itself, it would be effected by one or other of these respectively. And since Existence cannot be without a manner, the Supposition ends in this palpable Contradiction, "That an *uncaused* Being is *caused* by another Being, or by itself." *Enquiry into the Nature of the Human Soul*, p. 346, 347.

s Pag. 24.

h See the *Dissertation*, p. 48, 49.

X

unavoidably,

Ch. V. *unavoidably*, on account of the 'foremention'd Absurdity; which we apprehend to be sufficient for our Purpose, without attempting to shew *why* that was which was *eternal*, or assigning a *Ground* or *Reason* for the first of all conceivable Grounds and Reasons.

HE adds, "3dly, If this Author could prove in his way (*a posteriori*) that *Necessity* of Existence was a *Consequence* either of the Existence of the First Cause as such, or of his eternal Existence arising from the Absurdity of the contrary Supposition, he would have reason'd so far well; and this would be a sufficient Proof of the necessary Existence; and its being *consequently* inferred would be as good a Demonstration of it, as if it was directly, or *a priori*, inferr'd; and that way too it would be prov'd to be a *real, original, positive* Property of God ----- from whence he may and ought to infer back again, or *a priori*, not only *Eternity* of Existence, but also the *Unity, Infinity, and Immensity* of the Being and Attributes of the First Cause." i

Ans. THIS would be altogether quibbling upon the several Senses of the Word *Necessary*, and confounding Arguments *a priori* with those *a posteriori*; which I cannot but think our Author too frequently guilty of.

MODAL Necessity is allowed to be a *positive* Property of God: And what then? This does not *infer*, but *presuppose* his eternal independent Existence. A *consequential* Necessity implies the same eternal independent Existence, but will never shew us *why* it is *eternal* or *independent*, or how it comes to be so. The Existence of a First Cause is *necessary* to account for *the things that are made*,

ⁱ *Existence and Unity*, p. 25, 26.

but will the Consequence hold that therefore it is *Ch. V.*
necessary in itself, or *antecedently* to the Supposition of any thing else? No: This kind of Necessity is wholly founded in the Supposition that other Beings have existed (as he has it below) and may be removed together with that Supposition; since where there are no Effects there is no occasion nor room for a Cause.

WHICH way soever therefore we take it, we are obliged to stop at the *actual Existence* of the First Cause, and can never ascend one Step *a priori*; nor can we infer from either of these Necessities that there is but *one* independent Being, or ever be able to determine whether he is *finite* or *infinite*.

BUT Mr. Jackson urges again, "4thly, That, by denying a *positive Ground* of the Existence of the First Cause, we cannot prove either the *Eternity* or *Existence* of a First Cause, or if we could prove both, this would not infer the *Necessity* (any *Necessity*) or *Immutability* of his Existence.---- For, adds he, if the Existence was *originally* caused or *determined* by Nothing, or was actually without any *Reason* of the Existence at all, certainly it might be *temporary*, it might have *begun* at any time or *arose* from Nothing, *i. e.* without any *Reason*, as well as have existed always by *Nothing*, *i. e.* without any *Reason*; and so may as well and possibly cease to exist by Nothing, *i. e.* without any *Reason*, as continue always to exist by *Nothing*, *i. e.* again without any *Reason*." ^k

Ans^r. THE Cases are very different. In the two last a Cause or Reason is absolutely necessary; in the first it is absurd and impossible. Whatever is *eternal* can have nothing *antecedent* to it by the

^k Pag. 27, 28.

Ch. V. Terms ; and consequently no Cause, the very Notion of which must imply some Antecedency to its Effect, or else we leave no manner of Distinction between *Cause* and *Effect*.

WHATEVER therefore is eternal cannot *arise* from, or be *caused* or *determined by*, any Thing ; it cannot *arise* at all, or admit of any *Cause* or *Determination* in any proper Sense of these Words. But, on the contrary, that which is *temporary*, or *began* to be, must evidently require Something from which it arose and received its *Beginning* ; so long as positive Effects require a real Cause.

A TEMPORARY *Change* likewise in an eternal Being, or a *ceasing* to be what he always was, must for the same Reason require a Cause ; but there can be no Cause of this, as was shewn above ;¹ and therefore no such Change or Ceasing can be supposed without a Contradiction. ^m

THUS

¹ Pag. 139, 140.

^m “ No Substance or Being can have a natural Tendency to Annihilation or to become nothing. That a Being which once exists should cease to exist is a real Effect, and must be produced by a real Cause : But this Cause could not be planted in the Nature of any Substance or Being, to become a Tendency of its Nature : for it could not be a free Cause, otherwise it must be a Being itself, the Subject of the Attribute Freedom, and therefore not the Property of another Being : Nor a necessary Cause ; for such a Cause is only the Effect of Something imposing that Necessity, and so no Cause at all. Necessary Causes and passive Powers deny the thing they seem to express. This Effect therefore must be the Operation and Efficiency of another Being *ad extra*. One of our Prejudices here is, that we imagine Beings may have a natural Tendency to change their Nature : But then their Nature would be inconsistent and destructive of itself.—A Tendency to persevere in the same State of Nature, and a Tendency to change it, are Contradictories, and impossible to be planted in the same Subject at once : Or (not to urge the Contradiction) if the last prevailed, the remaining in the same State, for any given time, would be impossible.

THUS far the single Argument from Cause and Effect is able to carry us. We may add, that the same Reasons which proved that a First Cause always did actually exist, or that Existence was of its Nature as a First Cause, shew'd also that he must have a *Power* or *Ability* of Existing, a *Self-Sufficiency*, *Strength*, or *Stability* of Nature, which (if I may so speak) *supports* his Existence, and renders it *fix'd*, *permanent*, and *immutable*. This, I conceive, is what the learned Author of the following *Dissertation* styles *modal* or *metaphysical* Necessity, or a Connexion between *Existence* and the *Subject* of itⁿ; and which may be applied to the Existence of the First Cause, as that is proved to be *independent*, *i. e.* to be in such a *manner* as makes it impossible for us to suppose it ever not to be. Not that this Necessity is in any respect *antecedent* to his Nature, or capable of being consider'd as a *Cause* why he is, in any Sense of that Word. 'Tis only a partial Conception of his Nature itself, and always included in it: It arises from a Consideration of the *Mode* of the Existence already proved, and must be subsequent to it in the Order of our Ideas, and can afford no more than an Argument to us *that* he is, always was, and will be.

THIS *Power* or *Ability* to exist Mr. Jackson seems first to conceive as *antecedent* to the Existence itself, which is both groundless and repugnant; and then is led on to confound it with a *Cause* of Existence, which it cannot be in the present Case

“No Being, though it hath Power, can have such a Power as to annihilate itself: For then it ought to have Power to effect that it should have no Power, which is contradictory; since we are forced to suppose the Thing still remaining, which we suppose taken away.” *Enquiry into the Nature of the Human Soul*, p. 98, 99.

ⁿ Pag. 42, 50, 51.

without

Ch. V. without a Contradiction; but which yet it must be, or else there can be no kind of *Antecedency* in it, and the whole Argument *a priori* falls to the Ground.

FARTHER, the Foundation of this and the following Objections seems to lie wholly in these Terms, *Originally caused* and *Originally determin'd*, which our Author has ten times over in half the number of Pages, and which he applies with wonderful Impropropriety to the Existence of the First Cause, to a Being confessedly *eternal*, and consequently without any kind of *Original*; to that Being on whom every Thought or Thing, every Mode or Property, every *Cause* and *Determination* hangs, and whose Existence must be supposed before we can suppose any thing else.

Lastly, THIS, like the rest of his Arguments, appears to be of no Force at all, since it is of the same Force against his own Hypothesis of an *antecedent Ground*; and capable of being retorted in the very same manner; viz. If the Existence of That was originally caused or determin'd by Nothing, or was without any Reason, then certainly it might be *temporary*, it might have *begun* without any Reason, it may *cease*, &c. It may be mutable or corruptible in its Nature (as he has it again, p. 30.) "and so may carry within itself the Cause, Ground, or Reason of its ceasing to be:" i. e. may have in itself a Principle of not being what it is. Thus the same Argument will always do of either side, only by changing one of these Terms for the other; and the same Answer, which he gives for his *antecedent Ground*, will serve equally for the Existence of a *First Cause*.

WHAT has been said, I think, contains a sufficient Answer to his remaining Objections, as "5thly, admitting the Eternity of the *First Cause*, "or that he has existed always,---how does Eternity

"nity *a parte ante*, or having existed *always*, Ch. V.
 "prove that he must *continue* to exist *always*?" 

Ans. 1. IT proves this *ex absurdo*, or from the contrary being a positive *Effect* or *Change*; which, as such, must have a *Beginning*, and therefore a *Cause*; which Cause cannot be assign'd without a Contradiction.

2. IT proves it from the *Manner* of the Existence of that which was always, *viz.* *Independence* or *Self-existence*; for that which was *ab æterno*, must be in such a manner, and consequently must have an infinite Firmness or Stability of Nature, or be infinitely *able* to be: Existence must belong to his Essence, and be always included in it: it will be as much his Property always to *exist* independently, as to be Omnipotent, All-sufficient, &c. of himself, or independently. He adds, "It is certain, that what *always* was, unless it was necessarily existing, *in se*, always was, and always will be under a Possibility of not being, &c."°

Ans. WE allow him to be necessarily existing, but in a *Modal*, not the *Causal* Sense. Whatever always was *independently*, will always be; tho' *why*, or for what Reason he always was and now is, we know not, any more than why he is independent. Indeed whatever always was, was *independently*, notwithstanding what this Writer may insinuate; but that is not now the Question. "Suppose *Matter* had been always (as I shall prove presently that it might be by the Will of God) would it thence have follow'd, that it never was under a Possibility of not being, or of being otherwise than it actually was? Could not the same Power which *produced* it, have either

Ch. V. "annihilated, or have changed the Mode of its
 ~~~~~ "Existence?"

*Ans.* IF Matter always was *in esse*, as the Schools speak, or had *actual* Existence, it never could be *in fieri*, or have a bare *potential* Existence, by the Supposition, and consequently could never depend on any other Being for its Existence, or any Thing that belongs to it. An Author must certainly have very different Ideas to his Words from those that are commonly received, or else labour under great Confusion of Ideas, when he talks of that being *produced* which *had been always*; or *annihilated* or *changed* by an external Power, which neither owed its Being, nor the Mode of it, to any Thing external; which never *owed* or *received* any Thing at all. As to Mr. Jackson's Supposition of *eternal Matter*, I refer him to the Author cited in the Margin, who has consider'd the Point at large p.

"I should be glad to have a Reason given, why  
 "Continuance always *a parte ante*, or from Eter-  
 "nity, should prove Continuance *a parte post*, or  
 "to Eternity; more than Continuance *a parte*  
 "*post*, or to Eternity, should prove Continuance  
 "*a parte ante*, or from Eternity<sup>1</sup>."

*Ans.*

<sup>p</sup> *Existence and Unity*, p. 29.

"<sup>1</sup> And for this Reason, that a Thing must be done in some  
 "Time, Matter cannot be an *eternal Effect* of an eternal Cause.  
 "—The supposing an *Action*, such as the effecting of Matter  
 "must be, destroys the Idea of Eternity in *the Thing effected*, by  
 "the Action. Every Action must have a *Beginning* and an *End*;  
 "these are included in the Conception of Action; for, if it were  
 "without a Beginning, the Thing is not yet begun; or never  
 "was begun; and what was never begun, cannot be now end-  
 "ed, as the Production of Matter is. The denying *these Limits*  
 "to Action amounts still to an absolute Negation of it. And  
 "to



*Ans.* BECAUSE the Latter of these may be owing to the Will or Efficacy of a Prior Cause, but the Former cannot, except we shall maintain with our Author, that Cause and Effect may be co-eval, *i. e.* co-incident, or the very same thing, See *P. S.* to the 2d Edit. of *A. Bp. King*, p. 30.

HIS sixth Argument against the Existence of a First Cause, from the Possibility of an *infinite Series* of *dependent Beings*<sup>r</sup>, has been consider'd already in p. 99, 100. where his Method of confuting it, from the want of a *Ground* or *Foundation* for the *Whole*, was shewn to be insufficient, and another more direct one proposed, from the Nature of an *infinite Series*, as such; from the Repugnancy of *Infinite* and *Series*, or the Impossibility of a *positive Infinite* consisting in any Collection of *Parts*. I call this of our Author's an Argument against the Existence of a First Cause, since it must prove against that, if it prove any thing. For whether an infinite Series can be confuted, or not, upon our Principles, his own Hypothesis is never the better; whatever Difficulties may remain with us, we shall never mend ourselves by running into a plain Absurdity, such as that of a Cause prior to the First. But I think it has been shewn above,

---

"to say Matter was produced without Action, is as much as to say, it was effected without *Agency* or *Efficiency*.

"It will be said, *God* is eternal and naturally active, therefore an Action may be eternal: For the *Philosophers*, who say Matter is an *eternal Effect*, are no *Atheists*. But though it be certain, that the *Agent* is eternal, it will never follow that any *particular Act* is eternal. It is the Nature of any particular Act to be *circumscribed* and *temporary*; that is, in other Words, to be limited both *before* and *behind*, which is a Condition inconsistent with Eternity." *Enquiry into the Nature of the Human Soul*, p. 357.

<sup>r</sup> Pag. 31, 32.

Ch. V. that there's no Danger in the present Argument :  
 ~~~~~ We may add, that if there be any Force in it, it concludes for an eternal Series of *Grounds, Causes, Necessities*, &c. and thereby establishes that very Difficulty which it design'd to remove. He adds, " Or I might put him to prove the Impossibility of " a *finite* or *temporary* Series, being the Whole of " existent Beings ; for he can prove nothing *Eternal* upon his Scheme <sup>1</sup>. "

Ans. I CAN only prove the Impossibility of it from some one Part of this *finite, temporary* Series once receiving its Existence from Nothing, or being an Effect produced without any Producer or Cause ; which to me seems a Contradiction, but which, I suppose, may be no Absurdity with him, who can maintain an Effect *co-eval* and *co-equal* ² with its Cause, and so has the same Reason to make either of the two Cause or Effect, or to suppose the latter without the former ; " an Effect no " otherwise requiring a Cause than as *every Thing* " presupposes a Reason why it is, rather than is " not, " as he says above ³ : Which latter Proposition we acknowledge not to be true. / We only require a Reason for every Thing which once *was not* ; and if a *First Cause* can admit of no such Reason, and therefore be, in Mr. Jackson's Opinion, as great an Impossibility as an Effect without a Cause, we cannot help it.

Mr. JACKSON's seventh Objection is, That *mere Eternity* does not infer *necessary Existence*, because there might have been an eternal Series of created dependent Beings : For either God must have been

¹ *Existence and Unity*, p. 32.

² Pag. 35.

³ *Existence and Unity*, p. 30.

able to have created Beings from Eternity ; or, 1. Ch. V. He was a whole Eternity without a Power of creating : And, 2. There must have been some Cause, external or internal, to hinder him from all Eternity ; which Cause, being always the same, will hinder him to all Eternity ; and consequently the Deity must either have had a Power of acting from Eternity, or else he can never act at all *.

Ans. THE Deity is always without the Power of effecting what is implied in an eternal Creation, *i. e.* Of making a Thing *begin to be* which *always was*, or working a Contradiction. That any Thing should once be created or *produced*, or from Non-existence brought into Being (which is what all the World understands by Creation) which yet was really never in a State of Non-existence, or Producibility, (if I may so speak) includes Ideas that are manifestly repugnant, and therefore is no Object of Power ; and there wants neither external nor internal Cause to hinder any Being from effecting it : The Absurdity of the Supposition itself is a sufficient Bar ; and while that remains we cannot conceive even infinite Power able to do it ^y : It would imply a Power of *doing that which is Nothing*, as Dr. Clarke says ^z ; that is, *no Power at all*. But suppose a Thing once out of Being, and

* Pag. 33, 34.

^y " Seeing we have discover'd an intrinsical and natural Impossibility, that a successive Duration should be actually eternal ; it is no less than a Contradiction to itself, that the World should be created from everlasting : And therefore it is no Affront to the Divine Omnipotence, if, by reason of the formal Incapacity and Repugnancy of the Thing, we aver that the World could not possibly have been made from all Eternity, even by God himself. " *Bentley's Boyle's Lect. Sermon. 6. p. 24.*
2d Edit.

^z Demonstr. Prop. 10.

Ch. V. this Contradiction ceases, and the Production of it immediately becomes possible; or, if our Author will have it so, the Deity acquires a Power of creating it. Not that any one imagines him to receive a Quality or Perfection which he had not before; tho', for want of Language, we may be obliged to use such improper metaphorical Expressions as sound like it: The Alteration is not in *God*, but in our Manner of conceiving the Thing, or in the Nature of the *Supposition*. But this Objection has been so clearly and compleatly answer'd by the ingenious Author of *Dr. Clarke's Notion of Space examin'd*^a, that I have reason to hope we shall hear no more of it.

Mr. JACKSON proceeds, in the next place, to answer the Difficulties charg'd upon his own Hypothesis: As 1st, That the first of all Causes cannot have any thing in any manner of Conception prior to it. This he allows to be very true in that Sense in which it is the First Cause, *viz.* the first *Efficient*: But adds, "This Author knows very well, that the Ground of the Existence of the First Cause, under debate, is not alledg'd to be an efficient Cause, or Agent; in which Sense it would be most absurd to argue for a Cause of the First Cause."^b

Ans. BUT I know likewise, that, unless it be an *efficient Cause*, it will not serve our Author's Purpose; and that therefore he must either drop his Argument, or be driven into that which he confesses to be most absurd. What other sort of Cause can be conceiv'd as *antecedent* and *operating* at all Times, and in all Places? In what other Sense can it, *a priori*, infer the *Infinity* and *Unity* of the First Cause, or, as our Author says below, *make it*

^a From Pag. 89, to 103.

^b Pag. 37.

eternal and independent?^c. See the following *Dissertation*, p. 57, 58, 60.

HE adds, “ In reality and order of *Time*, all the essential Attributes of God are absolutely *co-existent* and *co-eval* with the Substance, and cannot exist without each other: Yet, as most of the Attributes are conceiv’d as derived from, and consequent upon, the Existence of the Substance, and as flowing from it, as from a *Foundation*; so *Necessity* of existing is a *Property* which cannot but be, in order of Nature and Conception, *antecedent* both to the *Substance* and *consequent* Attributes.”^d

Answ. ALL Attributes or Properties, as such, are unavoidably conceiv’d as inhering in and flowing from the *Subject* to which they are attributed, and by which they are supported. A Property *before* its Subject, or *independent* of it, is indeed a Property *sui generis*, and without Parallel, and therefore exempt from any Rules of Logick now extant; and, ’till some new ones be made in its Favour, we must conclude that this *Necessity*, if it be a real Property or *Mode* of Existence, as our Author terms it in this Place, it must presuppose the Existence of which it is a Mode or Property, and cannot be understood otherwise. If it be in any respect *antecedent* to it, it immediately becomes *causal*, or resolves into a *Principle extrinsick*, as has been often observ’d. There’s nothing will serve the Purposes intended by it, but making it both of these at the same time.

Mr. JACKSON comes next to reply to that un-surmountable Difficulty which he has been often press’d with, *viz.* That if he require a *Cause* for the first of all *Beings*, he will for the same Reason be obliged to find another Cause for that, and so

^c Ibid.

^d Pag. 38.

Ch. V. on. But, as his Reply will appear to consist of the the most arbitrary Positions and Assertions without Proof, and which have been over and over again confuted and retorted on himself by Dr. Gretton and the learned Author of the following *Dissertation*, I shall be excused for not staying to examine this Point very minutely.

“As it hath been proved that the First Cause cannot exist without some Ground or Reason of his Existence, so when this Reason or Ground is discover’d, it is impossible to go any farther; because this is the last possible Reason in the Nature of things.”^e

Why is it not as possible and necessary to go farther, as to proceed so far? How can this be the *last possible Reason*, if *every thing* must have a Reason, a Cause, a Ground, an antecedent Necessity to fix and support it? Or, if we must stop somewhere, why not at a First Cause or *Being*? This we affirm with much more Reason to be the last solid Resort in the Nature of Things and Causes. All beyond is empty and chimerical; either Sound without Sense, or some absurd and repugnant Sense. See *Dissertation*, p. 57, 58.

AGAIN, “As there must be (*a priori*) a Reason why the three Angles of a Right-lin’d Triangle are equal to two Right ones, and not to two and a half. ----- So this Reason can be nothing but absolute Necessity in the Nature of the thing, &c.”^f

THIS absolute Necessity is nothing but another Name for a Connexion of Ideas, discovering to us the Nature of the Proposition; which at last resolves into this, That every intuitive Truth, or first

^e *Existence and Unity*, p. 32.

^f Pag. 40.

Principle, is what it is, without any Reason *a priori* for it. All self-evident Axioms, otherwise called Indemonstrables, are what they are without any Cause or Ground ; they are immutable, fix'd, and permanent, that is *modally necessary*; and if a thousand Causes or Reasons could be given for them, instead of making them more evident or certain, they would be less evident and less certain than they are by their own Light. ^s

IN like manner, *Necessity*, as applied in the other Case, means only an inseparable *Connexion* between the Divine Essence and Existence, expressing *what* he is, not *why*. It denotes Stability, Permanency, Immutability ; it is the highest Certainty, above and beyond all *causal* Necessity, which would render it dependent on something else, and consequently more precarious than it is without it. ^h

AGAIN, " We must necessarily stop at this " Ground or Reason ; and to ask what is the *Reason* of this *Reason*, which is in the Nature of " things the last of all Reasons, is as absurd as it " would be to ask what is the Cause (the efficient " Cause) of the First (efficient) Cause." ⁱ

THIS is the very Absurdity which the Author himself runs into, and which we have been all the while opposing. After we have proved that there is a First Cause, a Ground, and Foundation of every thing besides him, we think it necessary to stop : But he goes on to find a Cause of that Cause, which in the Nature of things is the last of all *efficient, operating* Causes, which are in truth the only Causes to his purpose, and which he is often obliged to make use of ; as observed above. We prove *that* there is such a Being independent and

^s See Dr. Gretton's Review, c. 25.

^h See *Dissertation*, p. 66.

ⁱ *Existence and Unity*, p. 40.

Ch. V. all-sufficient ; he wants to know *why* he is so ; we tell him, in his own Words, that this is as absurd as to ask what is the Cause of the First Cause : We maintain that the last Result of all Reasoning is, that every Thing is *what* it is, as he has it above, and there would gladly terminate our Enquiries.

AGAIN, “ This being the *highest* and *last* Reason that can be, or be assigned for the Existence of any Being, it is plainly absurd and contradictory to demand, or to suppose it possible that there should be a Reason for this Reason, which is the *highest* and *last* Reason possible in the Nature of Things. ” ^k

ALL which is only borrowing our Answers to him when he demands a Reason *a priori* for God’s Existence. Instead of Reason or Necessity we need but put in God the First Cause, Substance for Shadow, and then every Argument of his becomes our own. Thus God being the highest and last Cause that can be, or be assigned, it is plainly absurd and contradictory to demand or suppose it possible that there should be any Cause for this Cause, which is the highest and last Cause possible in the Nature of Things,——and which cannot but be *what it is*.

THIS may appear well enough in our Scheme of an absolutely first uncaused Being ; but it is totally inconsistent with our Author’s Principle of demanding a Reason why every Thing or Circumstance of a Thing is, rather than is not, and continues to be what it is, rather than is changed into another Thing. ^l

ON this Hypothesis *Antecedent Necessity* itself, if it be any real Thing or Circumstance, must like-

ⁱ Pag. 41.

^k *Existence and Unity*, p. 30. Conf. Dr. Clarke. Answ. to the 6th Letter.

wife have a Reason why it is, rather than is not, and why it continues to be what it is: We must demand why it *cannot but* be, and why it might not *originally* have not been, or may not *cease* to be; or why there might not once have been, or may not now be, ten thousand antecedent Necessities as well as one. The Case I apprehend to be perfectly parallel, and the Force of the Retorsion irresistible.

MR. JACKSON has an Observation or two more, relating to the Proof of a God from the *Idea*, which may properly come under this Head. In *Page 47*, he attempts a Distinction between the *Scholastick* Proof and that of *Dr. Clarke*. The former, he says, “depends merely on forming in the Mind the *Idea*, “or making a Definition (which yet was own’d to “be imperfect) of a perfect Being, Part of whose “Perfection is *Self-Existence*; and then supposing “the Being, so defined, actually to exist.”

Ans. T H O’ this Proof be a poor one, yet ’tis better than that other which depends on forming in the Mind the *Idea* of a Cause antecedent, or a Principle extrinick, to the self-existent Being, which is supposed originally to determine its Nature, and be the Ground of its actual Existence. The former is only a small *Petitio Principii*, the latter is a plain and gross Absurdity. Neither is this same *Necessity* less a Fiction or Formation of the Mind, than the *Idea* of the Schoolmen: Whether it be an extrinick Principle or an intrinick Property, whereby the First Cause is supposed to exist; whether it be Causal or Modal, ’tis but *supposed* still, (setting aside all Arguments *a posteriori*) and sure the Schoolmen did not come behind the Doctor in *supposing*. It may indeed often *force itself upon us*, (as he urges below) that is, upon our Fancy or Imagination; but it can never force our Reason and Judgment; and Necessity of Perception will by no

Ch. V. means prove the Existence of an external Nature like to our Idea, much less its necessary Existence; as has been shewn above.

“THE Point, he says, is this: If, upon abstracted Consideration, we find that any Perfections necessarily pre-suppose the Existence of the Substance, and appear not to have any Ground of Existence, but upon first supposing the Existence of a Substance in which they inhere, such Perfections are plainly *consequent* and *posterior*, in order of Nature, to the Existence of the Substance. But if we find any one Perfection of such a Nature, that in our Thoughts we can more easily suppose the Non-existence of the Substance than of this *Property*, and even could suppose the Substance not to be, or to be otherwise than it is, if it was not for this Perfection inferring it; ——— Such a Perfection evidently *infers* the Existence of the Substance, and *precedes* it in the order of our Ideas, just as the Substance *infers* and *precedes*, in our Conception, the Existence of the other Attributes; and such a Perfection is *Self-Existence*.”¹

Ans. 1. LET us abstract as long as we please, we can never make a *Property* antecedent in Conception to the *Subject* in which it inheres, as all Properties are conceiv'd to do: To prove the Existence of any Property, is to prove that it exists in some Subject, and consequently the Existence of the Subject is necessarily supposed prior to the Property; the contrary would be inverting both the order of Nature and our Ideas.^m

WE may as well conceive Existence prior to the *Thing existing*, as suppose *Self-Existence*, or any

¹ *Existence and Unity*, p. 48.

^m See the two Passages from Dr. Clarke in the *Dissertation*, p. 59.

Perfection whatever, prior to the *self-existing* Subject. This indeed, or any other Perfection, conceiv'd as a *Principle extrinsic*, may precede and infer the Substance; but as a *Property* (the Name it here goes by) it evidently cannot, unless we will destroy the very Notion of a Property, and confound the plainest Signification of Words. Besides,

2. How can this Perfection *infer* the Existence of any Substance, if it would continue even tho' the Substance were supposed not to exist, or to be otherwise than it is? If it owe its own Existence to Nothing else, and want nothing for its Support?

In the last Place, 'Tis the greatest Absurdity to suppose the Substance away, and this Necessity remaining; to conceive it thus antecedent, and, as it were, *more self-existent* than the Substance itself.

'Tis plain, that what misleads our Author into this must be some confused Idea of *Causality*, which the Word Necessity carries along with it. Let us but put other Words in its room, which are equivalent to it, namely *Independence*, or *Immutability*, and we shall readily perceive that they pre-suppose something independent or immutable, and cannot be conceiv'd to remain while the Subject is suppos'd to cease. If the Substance be taken away, they fall of course; or if any Thing be conceiv'd not as a Substance, nor as depending on the Supposition of any Substance, like Time and Space, 'tis a clear Argument to me that it is nothing real, but a mere floating abstract Idea.

“ WHEN we are imagining no Being in the
 “ Universe to exist, we find a Necessity of the Ex-
 “ istence of some Property, as of the Infinity of
 “ Time and Space, or of Eternity and Imminity,

^m *Existence and Unity*, p. 48.

Ch. V. " which, whether we will or not, *infers* the Exist-
 " ence of a Being, of which these are Properties ;
 " and which it is as impossible to suppose remov'd
 " out of the Universe, as it is to remove the Equa-
 " lity of twice two to four ; and the Consequence
 " of removing which would be to suppose an *eter-*
 " *nal* and *infinite* NOTHING, than which nothing
 " can be supposed more contradictory and absurd. "a

As to the *Infinity* of Space and Time, and their being *Properties*, we have consider'd it before. We think these Ideas may easily be remov'd out of our Minds, at least we can conceive the Possibility of removing them, and that they cannot be proved from Reason to be necessary : And, if so, we may conceive *absolute Nothing*, if we please ; I mean notwithstanding any Reason that appears *a priori*. The Argument will amount to this only, *viz.* To suppose that there once was Nothing, implies that there never could be any Thing ; but Something now is, therefore the former Supposition is absurd. This is all the Absurdity that follows from the Supposition of *mere Nothing*, and by it we prove the *Eternity* of Something, or some one First Cause. But none are obliged to maintain that other Absurdity of an *infinite eternal* Nothing, except such as are possess'd with the Ideas of *Infinity* and *Eternity*, even tho' they cannot prove the Existence of any real Being to apply them to, at least by any other Argument than barely their *having* these Ideas ; which must be allowed to be a very feeble one, except either these same Ideas were innate, or shewn to be as universal and necessary as if they were so. If that was the Case, there would be no Dispute about them : If not, the Difficulty (of an *eternal* and *infinite* Nothing) concerns only the Gentlemen in our Author's way of Thinking, who

have got such Ideas into their Heads, and are not able to get rid of them again. But this likewise has been anticipated already.

ALL that remains on this Subject is the following Note in *Page 47*. "The strongest Proof of the Existence of God drawn from the Idea of him I take to be this; *viz.* If I have a real and positive Idea of a self-existent Being; or if *Self-existence*, applied to *Being*, is no Contradiction, it hence follows, that the Existence of a self-existent Being is *possible*: ----- But if the Existence of a self-existent Being is *possible*, it thence follows, that such a Being does *actually exist*; because the Supposition of the *possible* Existence of any Being, without the Supposition of the Existence of a self-existent Being, is an express Contradiction. So that *possible* Existence (with respect to a self-existent Being) infers *actual* Existence. If there is any Fallacy in this Argument, I should be glad to see where it lies."

It lies in this, that it proceeds to determine of the *Possibility* without first enquiring into the *Fact*; when there is really no certain way of knowing whether it be *possible* or no, but by considering what *actually* is. We know not how a self-existent, uncaused Being can exist; we have not sufficient Data, or Compass of Thought or Ideas, to go upon in the Question of *Possibility*, if made previous to the other. See above, p. 6, 7.

It also takes the Word *possible* in two Senses; first, as appearing so to *us*, or implying no Contradiction to our Ideas; secondly, as being really so *in itself*, or including the actual Existence of a *Power* requisite to, or a sufficient *Ground* of Existence; the latter of which will by no means follow from the former. See above, p. 10. The Truth of the Case is this: The Supposition of any *dependent* Being implies a Necessity for some one inde-

Ch. V. independent; because an infinite Series of dependent Beings is an exprefs Contradiction: This is all the Supposition that requires his actual Existence, or makes it *necessary*. But this Necessity is *a posteriori*, drawn from the supposed Existence of something *beside him*, not from the *Idea of him* only: And any other Necessity but this will prove equivocal, and take for granted the very Thing in Question. It will be a *Necessity* for his Existence *ex Hypothesi* that he does *actually* exist; otherwise it will be as strong a Necessity for his *not existing*; since, if we suppose a self-existent Being once out of Being, it will be impossible for him ever to come in. In short (exclusive of all Reasons *a posteriori*) it is a Necessity which does not affect the *Thing* one way or other, but terminates in our own arbitrary *Suppositions*. If there *can* be a self-existent Being, then 'twill be a Contradiction that there should not be one; or, if there *may be* a First Cause, there *must be* one, for the Reason above; tho' whether there really can be one or not (*i. e.* whether there *is* one, otherwise it can never be) without this Reason, is still as much a Question as ever. Is it not then both a much shorter and a surer way to begin with this Reason itself, which shews (*a posteriori*) that he *must be*, and therefore concludes irrefragably that he *is*? Would it not be full as well to rest contented with such Arguments as are sufficient to establish the *Fact*, as those *a posteriori* are, rather than be perpetually hunting after other *Reasons*, which are of no force till that Fact is established, and never fit for any thing but to perplex and unsettle it again? °

HAVING endeavour'd to shew the Inconclusiveness of all Mr. Jackson's Arguments in support of

° See a full Answer to the Proof of the Existence of a God from the *Idea*, in all its various Shapes, by the learned *Mosbemi*, in the Notes to his *Latin Translation of Gndworth*, p. 896, &c.

his *antecedent Necessity* or *internal Cause* of God's Existence; having also shewn the Insufficiency of his Reply to my former Objections, I shall conclude with some more positive Arguments against the Possibility of it, from the same Learned Writer who has obliged us with those against Space and Time. The Reader will observe that they all center in this one Reason, *viz.* That there is no Cause prior to the First.

1. IF there be any Internal Cause, Reason, Ground or Foundation, it is either the Substance itself, or some Property of it. But the Substance is not the Cause of itself, nor is any Property a Cause of the Substance. Therefore, &c.

THE *Minor* is evident. For, to make the Substance the Cause, Reason, Ground or Foundation of itself, is to make it prior to itself, dependent and independent; which is an express Contradiction.

AND to Suppose any Property or Properties to be the Cause, Reason, Ground or Foundation of the Substance, is *ὑπερὸν πρότερον*; is making Subjects flow from their Properties, instead of the Properties flowing from their Subjects; which is infinitely absurd.

2. THE Question, Whether *there is* any internal Cause, &c. amounts to the same with this; Whether *there exists* any internal Cause of the First Cause, or of God's Existence? But this is the very same as to ask whether God exists, and is tantamount to it. Therefore, &c.

The Reason is manifest. For, to ask whether such or such a *Property* exists, is the same as to ask whether it has a real *Subject*; and the Subject in this Case is supposed to be God himself, or Nothing.

AND therefore the *τὸ διότι* in this Case resolves into the *τὸ ὅτι* only; wherefore there is no such thing as internal Cause.

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3. EXISTENCE and *Essence* in God are the very same; and consequently to ask after a Reason, Cause, Ground or Foundation of his *Existence*, comes to the same as to enquire after a Reason, Cause, Ground or Foundation of his *Essence*, that is of himself.

AND therefore all Pretence to any *internal Cause*, is only, in other Words, to make the Thing the Cause of itself, which is either absurd, or saying nothing; either Sense without Truth, or Sound without Sense: Therefore, in Strictness and Propriety, there is no such thing as an INTERNAL CAUSE, which was to be proved.



C H A P. VI.

Of the UNITY.

Ch. VI.

HAVING been so large already in confuting the Principles upon which our Author's ten following Demonstrations of the *Unity* of God are built, I might, for the same Reason that I did before, decline any farther Examination of them. But, as Mr. *Jackson* seems to have some Opinion of them, by his giving himself the Trouble of publishing most of them a second time, I shall not grudge the Labour of considering them particularly.

BUT I must premise a few Things, in order to take off an invidious Insinuation or two, as if, because we cannot allow the *Unity* to be demonstrable *a priori*, that therefore we don't think it capable of

of any Proof, or don't at all believe it, or oppose Ch. VI.
it purely out of a *Prejudice in favour of the Scheme* 
of *Polytheism, or Ditheism, or Tritheism* ^a.

ON the contrary, I think the common Arguments *a posteriori* for the Unity of the Divine Nature, drawn from the *Order and Harmony* of the World, very good and sufficient. They make the Point morally certain, and render the other side of the Question highly improbable and *unreasonable*, as was said before ^b. And, if St. Paul ^c had not thought so too, he would scarce have pronounced the Heathens *without Excuse* for neglecting them, *Rom. i. 20*. For I fancy our Author does not imagine that the Apostle intended any Argument *a priori* in that place. But *Probability* is one thing, and *Demonstration*, in the proper Sense, (which the Author, I dare say, would have it here taken in) is another : And, if we cannot arrive at absolute Certainty in this great Point by the Light of Nature, we ought to be the more thankful for the Benefit of Revelation, which has put it past Dispute. As to the received Doctrine of the *Trinity*, which, I suppose, our Author means to stigmatize with the hard Names above, I can assure him, that I have scarce ever thought of it in the course of this Debate. But, to obviate all Suspicions of this kind, it may be proper here to produce the Sentiments of one whom Mr. Jackson will acknowledge to be far from being prejudiced in favour of any *Ditheistick or Tritheistick Hypothesis*; I mean the Learned Mr. Nye, who was one of the threwest Unitarians that perhaps *England* ever bred. The

^a *Existence and Unity*, p. 6.

^b Note 10 to A.Bp. King, and Remark g, p. 80. 2d Edit.

^c See *Existence and Unity*, p. 4.

Ch. VI. most or best of the *Socinian* Pamphlets, if I am not
 ~~~~~ misinform'd, were his ; yet he gave up the natural  
 Proof of the Unity very deliberately, and went not  
 a Step farther than I have done <sup>d</sup>. I shall give his  
 own Words as they are found in his Discourse  
 concerning Natural and Revealed Religion <sup>e</sup>. “ As  
 “ the Beauty, Immensity and Designs of the  
 “ World and all its Parts evince to us, that there  
 “ is an all-wise and all-powerful Mind, the Cause  
 “ of them ; so they no way prove, or so much as  
 “ intimate, that there are more such Minds, or  
 “ more Gods. They demonstrate beyond Excep-  
 “ tion that such a Mind and Power there is ; but  
 “ not that there is more than one : Therefore, as  
 “ to the Unity of God, we may properly say, that  
 “ we own but one all-powerful and all-knowing  
 “ Mind, or but one God, *because we know of no*  
 “ *more* ; of one we are certain, of more than one  
 “ there is no manner of Intimation in all Nature.

“ I THINK it may be proper and convenient to  
 “ abide by this Argument for the Unity of God,  
 “ and *what may be inferred from it* : We ought  
 “ not (in my Judgment) to look out for all manner  
 “ of little Congruities, Umbrages and Shadows of  
 “ Argument, in a Point of so great Consequence  
 “ as is the Unity of God. ----- I said it might be  
 “ convenient to abide by the afore-mentioned Ar-  
 “ gument of the Unity of God, and *what may be*  
 “ *inferred from it* : That which may be inferred  
 “ is, that as we discern by the World and its Parts  
 “ an almighty and all-wise Mind, without any the  
 “ least Signification that there are more such Minds ;  
 “ so, if indeed there were more whom we ought to  
 “ acknowledge and worship, it would have been

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<sup>d</sup> Notes to *King*, *ibid*.

<sup>e</sup> Pag. 40, 41, &c.

“ some way as plainly signified to us in the Works  
 “ of the Creation, as ’tis signified by these Works  
 “ that there is at least one such Mind. ’Tis not  
 “ likely, if there were more Gods, or more Crea-  
 “ tors, that they would give no Intimation of it,  
 “ neither in the Works of Creation, nor of Provi-  
 “ dence ; that we might not omit to pay them that  
 “ equal Veneration, which their Benefits to us,  
 “ and the Excellence and Dignity of their own Na-  
 “ tures require of us.

“ It ought not to be objected to this Argument,  
 “ that ’tis neither direct nor demonstrative ; but  
 “ only negative and probable : For ’tis *as good an*  
 “ *Argument as in this Case we need.* The Argu-  
 “ ment for the Being of God must be positive, di-  
 “ rect and demonstrative ; because we affirm some-  
 “ thing, namely that God is ; but the Proof of the  
 “ Unity of God needs only to be negative, because  
 “ we meddle not with affirming any thing ; but  
 “ content ourselves, that, because we know of no  
 “ more Gods, therefore we are no way concerned  
 “ how we may honour, or please, or approve our-  
 “ selves to more. Though in very deed the Ar-  
 “ gument seems more than probable and negative ;  
 “ we may say it has a Moral Certainty though not  
 “ a Physical : For it will hardly (I think) be denied,  
 “ that ’tis morally certain that if there were more  
 “ Gods, or more Creators, this would have been  
 “ some way clearly signify’d, by the manner of  
 “ Creation, or by some Circumstances either of  
 “ *That*, or of Providence. Else how should we pay  
 “ to them the Adoration and Acknowledgements,  
 “ which (as their Creatures, and on the Account  
 “ of their Perfections) are naturally due to them  
 “ from us ? ”

Mr. JACKSON’S first Demonstration is as follows ;

“ GOD being *necessarily existent* (or necessary  
 “ Existence being a positive Property of God) it is

Ch. VI. “ a Contradiction in Reason to suppose him not to  
 “ exist.—But it is not a Contradiction to suppose  
 “ *no more than One* necessarily existent Being to  
 “ exist; therefore *no more than One* can exist. For,  
 “ if *Two* or more such Beings could exist, we should  
 “ not only have as clear an Idea of the necessary  
 “ Existence of *Two* or more, as we have of *One*, but  
 “ it would equally imply a Contradiction to our  
 “ Ideas for any *One* of them *not* to exist, as it is  
 “ a Contradiction to suppose *One* not to exist;  
 “ Whereas, in respect of *One*, we see a plain Con-  
 “ tradiction to suppose it *not* to exist, but in respect  
 “ of more than one we see no such Contradiction<sup>f</sup>.

IN what Sense *necessary Existence* can be a *Pro-*  
*perty* of God, has been at large consider'd. But,  
 what Sense soever we take it in here, I think it  
 will be of small Service to the present Argument.  
 In the *Modal* Sense of Necessity (*i. e.* as a Con-  
 nection of actual Existence with Independence) every  
 independent Being will be necessarily existent, and  
 it will be an Impossibility in Nature for every such  
 Being not to exist: And how do we know (*a priori*)  
 that there are not a hundred such independent Be-  
 ings, and by consequence all necessarily existent?  
 In the *Causal* Sense of the Word (*i. e.* as antece-  
 dently inferring Existence) every Being originally  
*grounded* on such Necessity cannot, without a Con-  
 tradiction, be supposed away; but how do we know  
 again (*a priori*) that there may not be Twenty such  
 antecedent, original Grounds; or why might not  
 the same absolute Necessity have *operated* as easily  
 in several Beings, as *One*?

AGAIN, This Necessity of Existence in either  
 of the two Senses may be *real* or *ideal* only; if our  
 Author speaks of the former, he can never prove  
 it (*a priori*) except he could look into the Essences

<sup>f</sup> *Existence and Unity*, p. 116.



of all Things, and see how Existence does, or does not result from each of them. He must therefore beg the Question of a *real Necessity* for any *One*, and why may we not do the same for a Hundred? If his Necessity be *ideal* only, then the Essence of every Thing, into which this Idea enters, will be equally necessary; and why cannot I connect it with a Thousand as well as One? Gods (three or four suppose) being in this Sense *necessarily existent*, as our Author says, or *necessary Existence being the Property of them*, it is a Contradiction to suppose any of them not to exist; it is equally a *Contradiction* to suppose all of them not to be, (all being previously supposed necessarily existing) as to suppose it of One: The Argument is the same for as many as ever you'll please to *suppose*. For if the *Idea* of Self-existence or necessary Existence, abstracting from other Considerations, can infer Existence, it is very plain that we may apply it to as many Subjects as we have a mind; and the same Idea will still be of the same Force, and equally prove all, or none. We must therefore enquire into the Nature of Things, and not imagine that the making a *mental Proposition* shall stand for Demonstration of *Realities ad extra*. If we look into Fact we see indeed a *plain Contradiction* (as our Author says) in supposing no one independent Being to exist; because the whole Universe would depend on Nothing: And we see no Necessity for more than One such Being, because One is sufficient; Independence implying Self-sufficiency and the highest Perfection: But this does not prove that more Causes than one might not possibly concur in the Production and Preservation of the World, tho' One was really sufficient. *Necessity* then (as well as *Contradiction*) admits of two Senses more, viz. *a priori* and *a posteriori*. The former can never be made out; or if it could, 'twould prove nothing

Ch. VI. thing to the present Purpose ; the latter is obvious, and proves conclusively that there is one Self-existent Being *at least*, One or more, and that's all : It does not amount to *One only*, or to One exclusive of all others, which is what this Demonstration wants. If the Author abides by the first, it is as easy to prove the Existence of a Thousand as of One ; since it is only putting necessary Existence into the Definition of every God. If he abides by the second, he only proves that Effects must have either *Cause* or *Causes* : The Question of the *Unity* then remains as before. I suppose he will take Necessity in the former Sense ; and then, beside the foregoing Defects, his Demonstration takes for granted the three following Propositions. 1. That if there be any real Necessity it must *appear*. 2. That such a Necessity *does appear*. And 3. That it can be *applied to the Existence* of the First Cause, and made the *Ground* thereof without a Contradiction : All which Propositions we deny, and have, we think, given sufficient Reasons for denying them above.

2. " To suppose *Two* or more necessarily existent Beings to exist, is to suppose this plain Contradiction ; that any one of them, as being *independent* of the others by its *necessary Existence*, may exist alone, and consequently may exist without the Existence of the others ; and this consequently is to suppose that none of them are *necessarily existent*, at the same time that they are *supposed necessarily existent*." <sup>8</sup>

NECESSITY is used here in two different Senses, both as *absolute* and *relative*. In the former, neither of the two Beings can exist without the other, *i. e.* without our supposing the other to exist also, since that is equally necessary. In the latter, either of them may exist alone, *i. e.* without the Help of

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<sup>8</sup> *Existence and Unity*, p. 117.

the other, or without the Supposition of the other as requisite to its own Existence. The Consequence therefore, that either of them may exist alone, and so neither of them are necessary, is a mere *Equivocation* on *Necessity*, using it both in an absolute and relative Sense at the same time.

OR thus: Any of these Beings may or might exist alone, were nothing else consider'd but their *mutual Independence*; but, when we consider that all (be they ever so many) are equally supposed *necessarily existing*, none can be supposed to exist *alone* without Contradiction. In one view it might be supposed to exist *alone*, but upon the whole it cannot. So this is nothing more than the known Sophism, *A dicto secundum quid ad dictum simpliciter*.

3. "Two or more necessarily existent Beings implies another plain Contradiction, *viz.* That, whilst they are suppos'd to be each *independent* in Existence of the others, they are yet necessarily *dependent* on each other; and, being *equal* and of the same kind, cannot exert the least degree of Power without mutual Consent; consequently none of them are *supreme*, absolutely *independent*, or *all-perfect* <sup>b</sup>."

*Ans.* THEY are not dependent on each other, either for their *Existence* or any of their *Perfections*, being all by the Supposition absolutely *uncaused*, and consequently *independent* on every Thing for what they are, and always were. In this Sense they are all of them as much independent as any one could be. *Independency* in another Sense of the Word, *i. e.* implying an absolute *Supremacy* <sup>i</sup> over every other Being in Nature, as  
it

<sup>b</sup> *Existence and Unity*, p. 118.

<sup>i</sup> "As to that part of the Argument which makes *Supremacy* a necessary Character of an all-perfect Being, it seems to carry  
" still

Ch. VI.  it is founded on a Supposition that there are no other Beings *of the same kind*, is what should not have been *supposed* but demonstrated; otherwise it is a manifest *Petitio Principii* <sup>k</sup>. As to the *Actions* of these several independent Beings, since they are all supposed to be equally good, wise, &c. they may be conceived to conspire together in every thing that is good and wise: The same eternal and immutable *Relations of Things*, which the Author supposes our Creator always determin'd by, will equally and invariably determine each of them <sup>l</sup>. Nor will such acting in concert render them properly *dependent* or *imperfect*, since it is the intrinsic Perfection of each, and not the Will of another which makes him so to act. Ten Clocks may strike together without depending one upon another, and so may as many voluntary Beings *agree in one*: They may all have the same Perfections in the

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“ still less Weight and Evidence in it. Supremacy cannot be an  
 “ absolute or essential Character of the Divine Nature, because it  
 “ is a relative Term, and only supposes, that when God has  
 “ made any Thing, he has a Right of Dominion over it; but it  
 “ does not follow, that if he had never proceeded to make any  
 “ Thing, or to operate externally, this Attribute could in a pro-  
 “ per Sense have belong'd to him. To say that he must have  
 “ been Supreme without his creating any Thing dependent on  
 “ him, is plainly to beg the Question, and proves nothing against  
 “ the Possibility of other independent Beings, equal in Power  
 “ and every other Perfection to him.” *Fiddes. Theol. Spec.* p. 98.

<sup>k</sup> See Notes to *King*, p. 81. 2d Edit.

<sup>l</sup> “ It must be acknowledg'd, the Distinction of a moral and  
 “ a free Agent, when referr'd to God, is of less Force to those  
 “ who believe, that, notwithstanding the perfect Freedom of his  
 “ Choice, he is always under a Necessity of doing what is best  
 “ to be done, and in the best manner: And if he can only act as  
 “ infinite Wisdom and Goodness direct, then, supposing more  
 “ Gods than one, and all of them infinitely wise and good, they  
 “ must still will the same Thing, and design the same Method  
 “ of executing it.” *Fiddes. Theol. Spec.* p. 96.

same



same Degree, *i. e.* the highest, and exert them freely, without any kind of Influence on each other, or Possibility of interfering. And, if our Author will contend for any other *Perfection* than this, it is his business to prove it.

4. "IT is a Contradiction to the Nature of *Perfection* to suppose Two or more *necessarily-existent* *perfect* Beings of the same kind; because One of them, by the Supposition, having all the Perfections which are or can be in more than One, more than One cannot be *necessary*, either in respect of *Nature* or *Perfections*; *i. e.* cannot be at all, or in any respect *necessarily-existent*, consequently not God.<sup>m</sup>"

HERE the Author plays upon the equivocal Word *Necessary*; and his Argument, if put into Syllogism, will have more than three Terms. What mean the Words *more than One cannot be necessary*? Does he mean that there's *no Need* of more, or *no Cause* for more, or *no Reason* for asserting more? All this may be allow'd, and yet, for any thing we know, there may be *actually* more. Does he mean *Necessity a priori*, or *a posteriori*? *ideal* or *real*? Whatever he means, it is only blending the several Notions of *Necessity* (Logical, Moral, Physical, Metaphysical) which should be kept distinct, but upon confounding which most of his Arguments depend.

HE seems also to have pitch'd upon two distinct Mediums here, *viz.* *Perfection* and *Necessity*, without making any proper use of either. He has not proved that a self-existent Being must have all conceivable Perfections *absolutely* or *numerically*, (if I may so speak) which would indeed exclude every thing else; but only *specifically*, or Perfections of every sort: Which may consist with a Plurality of

<sup>m</sup> Pag. 119.

Ch. VI. self-existent Beings, either All but One remaining inactive, or Each exercising his own Perfections in his particular System, or All conspiring in the Government of one. Whether there is any other Perfection in Nature but this, is the only Question; and that there really is, neither has, nor can, I think, be proved from the *Idea* of absolute *Necessity*, or of *Perfection*: unless supposing one individual Being to be endow'd with all possible Perfections, both *specifick* and *numerical*, were the same as demonstrating him to be so.

5. "THERE cannot be more Gods than *One*, for "this plain Reason, because *One* is sufficient; the "Sufficiency of *One* destroying the *Necessity* of Existence, and consequently the *Existence*, of another: For that Being cannot be *God*, which is "not necessarily existent. And to say, it is necessary for more Gods than *One* to exist, is to say, "that *One* is not sufficient <sup>a</sup>."

HERE the Author seems to be guilty of the same Equivocation in the Word *Sufficient*, as before in *Necessary*. He blends the Ideas of *self-sufficient* and *sufficient* to an *End*. *A posteriori* it does not appear but that *One* God is sufficient, and consequently no more are necessary, *i. e.* to account for the Phenomena of Nature. But such a Sufficiency as this is far from excluding the Existence of more. *A priori*, or antecedently to all Creation, there may, for any thing that appears, be many *independent* and *all-sufficient* Beings; and therefore necessary *in se*, or *modally* so, tho' their Existence be not necessary for any thing else; and consequently the Existence whereof we are neither able to prove nor disprove. So that here again his *Medius Terminus* is double, and the Syllogism consists of four Propositions. He adds °;

<sup>a</sup> Pag. 119.

° Pag. 120.

“BUT several suppos’d necessary existent Be- Ch. VI.  
 “ings, equal in Power, &c. are none of them  
 “*independent, supreme, omnipotent, &c.* because  
 “not so in respect of each other; nay, none of  
 “them have the least Degree of *Power, &c. abso-*  
 “*lute and independent*, every Degree of it being  
 “*limited* by every equal Degree of the *Power, &c.*  
 “of the other suppos’d necessarily-existent Beings.”

*Ans.* THERE is no such *Limitation* where there can be no *interfering* or *clashing*: And there can be no clashing where all are absolutely perfect, infinitely wise, good, &c. as was shewn above. Besides, if we should affirm that each of these self-existent Beings has only Power over the System which he produced; how will our Author shew the contrary? I’m sure any other *Power, &c.* than this, remains yet to be proved, and to be proved from some better Topick than the bare *Idea* of it.

6. “IF it be said, that there may possibly be  
 “Two or more necessarily existent Beings of *dis-*  
 “*ferent kinds*; this is the very same as saying,  
 “that there may possibly be Two or more *same*  
 “things in kind of *different* kinds, which is a Con-  
 “tradiction: For *Necessity* of Existence is the most  
 “*simple uniform* Idea that can be conceiv’d, hav-  
 “ing no conceivable *Difference* or *Variety* in it.<sup>p</sup>”

7. “To suppose Two or more necessarily existent  
 “Beings *different in kind*, is to suppose the neces-  
 “sarily existent Perfections of each Being to be  
 “different in kind, and no One of the necessary  
 “existent Beings to have the Perfections which are  
 “in the others, as being different in kind; conse-  
 “quently that no One of these supposed Beings is  
 “*absolutely perfect*, being perfect only in its re-  
 “spective kind, but imperfect in respect of the Per-  
 “fections of the other Beings which it wants<sup>q</sup>. ”

<sup>p</sup> *Existence and Unity*, p. 120.

<sup>q</sup> *Ibid*.

Ch. VI.

*Answer.* 1. THIS cannot be said, while these several self-existent Beings are supposed equally perfect both in *Kind* and *Degree*; all *absolutely* good, wise, &c. which is our present Supposition. So these two Arguments are foreign to the Point.

BUT, 2. If it should be said that they are of *different* Natures in some Respects, and each only perfect in its *kind*, wanting some of the Perfections of the rest; how will our Author shew the contrary? How do we come at our Notion of the several Qualities or Perfections which we attribute to the Maker of the World, but only from observing them in some degree in his Works? Do we know directly and *a priori* all the several sorts of Perfection which may be connected with Self-existence, so as to be able to determine that all are necessarily included in one self-existent Being? Or can our Author describe all that results from his own Principle of *antecedent Necessity*? Dr. Clarke could not see the *immediate and necessary Connexion* of it with INTELLIGENCE; \* and, but for our Proofs *a posteriori*, I fear we should be hard put to it to discover any thing of the Divine *Wisdom* or *Liberty*; nor ever be able to demonstrate against the Supposition of an eternal, absolute, and *blind Fatality*; a *Supposition* which, I think, appears much more agreeable to our Author's Principle than the contrary.

LASTLY, Why may not different self-existent Beings, or Beings endowed with different kinds of Perfection, all be supposed to flow from this one *simple uniform* Necessity, as well as that Variety of Perfections belonging to the Deity, † all which our Author must derive from the very same *simple* Necessity of Existence by which he conceives the

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\* *Demonstr. Prop.* viii. p. 50. 7<sup>th</sup> Edit.

† Notes to *King*, p. 53. 2<sup>d</sup> Edit. *Colliber's Impartial Enquiry*, p. 170.



Deity himself to subsist? Let us see how he clears this Difficulty. Ch. VI.

“ IF it be said, that one and the same Necessity of Existence may be the Reason or Ground of *different* necessarily existent Beings, as well as of *different* necessarily existent Properties in one Being ; the Answer is, That different Properties are the Effect, Result or Consequence of *one* Necessity, because they exist in and flow from *one* and the *same* Being or Substance, in which the Necessity itself exists, as the Reason or Ground of the Existence of the Being or Substance. So that the Necessity is the Ground or Reason of the Existence of *One* Being only, tho’ the different Properties of the Being (which are essentially inseparable from it, and constitute the Being *what it is*, and so are not really different from it) are and cannot but be necessarily existent ; because the Being or Substance of which they are *essential* Properties, is necessarily existent ; but different necessarily existent Beings-----must infer the internal Necessity or *Mode* of their Existence to be different in kind.”

THE Meaning of which, as far as I can understand it, is this: That the *Substance* only flows from this uniform Necessity, and therefore can be but *one* ; whereas the *Properties* flow, not from it, but from the Substance, and therefore may be *diverse*.

To which I reply, 1. According to Dr. Clarke this same Necessity is the *Ground and Foundation both of the Divine Substance and of all the Attributes* ;\* and consequently they should both flow equally from it, and be equally affected by it.

2. THESE Properties are either something different from the Substance, or they are not: If they

\* *Existence and Unity*, p. 122, 123.

\* Answ. to 7<sup>th</sup> Letter, Line *ult.*

Ch. VI. are *not really different* from the Substance, and yet are different from one another, then things of a different Nature may flow from the same Necessity, according to our Author himself, who supposes this Substance to flow from it. If they are different from the Substance, as well as from each other, and this Necessity be only the Cause of That, and not Them, then might the Substance (notwithstanding such Necessity) have had other very different Properties, which amounts to the same thing; and by the same Reason there may be variety of other Properties in other Substances, tho' these same Substances were all alike necessarily existent. Not to insist upon the Absurdity of supposing That to be the Cause of God's Existence, which is not the Cause of his Attributes.

IF this Substance be nothing else but an aggregate or entire Collection of all the essential Properties, which I take to be the Truth of the Case, (tho' the Author seems here desirous to make it both the same with them and not the same, in order to guard against both Sides of the Dilemma) and if several distinct Qualities may exist together and compose *one Substance*, and yet all flow from the same uniform Necessity; it seems as easy to conceive several *distinct Substances* proceeding in like manner from the same Source; at least 'twill not be easy to demonstrate the contrary. Tho' in Truth 'tis not very difficult to demonstrate any thing from such a Principle as this of *absolute Necessity*, which will be whatever the Demonstrator pleases to make it.\*

IN the last Place, this Necessity is here term'd the *Mode* of the Existence of these Beings; which therefore must, as such, presuppose their *actual Existence*, and cannot be the *original Ground* or *Reason* of it, as the Author has said just before: It must also presuppose the several *Attributes*

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\* See *Dissertation*, p. 55.

of these self-existent Beings, and can really *effect* nothing in relation to them, nor infer any more than that they are and will be necessarily and immutably what they are and always were, be they few or many.

“ 8. To suppose *Two* or more necessarily existent Beings to be *finite* in their Existence, *finite* in Place or Extension, is to suppose them *imperfect* Beings.—Necessity of Existence has no Relation to *Place*, any more than it has to *Time*; and whatever is necessary at all, is and must be necessary *in all Places* alike, as well as *in all Time*. —Therefore the Existence of *One* necessarily existent Being does, by the Necessity of its Existence, which is and must be *unlimited* and *absolutely immense*, necessarily exclude the Existence of another similar or necessarily existent Being. And to suppose *Two* or more such absolutely immense uniform Beings, is a plain Contradiction; because it implies that each being *uniformly* and *equally* in the same manner immense with the other, there is and can be no *Difference* between them; consequently that they are but *One*, even whilst they are supposed *Two* or more than *one*. ”

1. WE don't suppose the Deity to be extended at all, and therefore cannot allow him to be either *finite* or *infinite*, in our Author's Sense: Which would not only be the greatest of Imperfections, but is itself an Impossibility, and has, we think, been sufficiently shewn to be so in Chap. III.

2. WE maintain and can prove that the Deity is *present* to all his Works, present in such a manner as to perceive and influence them; and any other Presence beside this would be so far from a Perfection, that it would serve to no one Purpose whatsoever, as was observed in the same Chapter.

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† *Existence and Unity*, p. 123, 124.

Ch. VI. 3. IF Necessity has *no Relation* to Place, any more than to Time, how does it follow that the Being which exists by it must be in *all* Places and Times? One would think it a more natural Consequence to infer that therefore the necessarily-existent Being has likewise *no Relation* to Place, and therefore may be supposed to exist *in none*; or, if at all, *in any one*. To draw the intended Consequence, it should have been said that *Necessity* has Relation to *all Places*: Which it has just as much as a *Truth* or an *abstract Idea* has, which are commonly said to be the same at all Times and in all Places, because they have nothing at all to do with either Time or Place.

4. IF this self-existent Being should possess an *unlimited Extension*, yet why may not another do the same, and they be both commensurate? Why must one *absolutely immense* Being exclude the Existence of another such, any more than that of any other Substance whatever? Is it because one leaves no room or place for another? How then is there room for any thing? On this Supposition indeed there will be no *specifick Difference* between these *Two*; but they may be at least *numerically distinct*, and from *specifick* to *numerical* there's no Consequence. They are *but one* in *Presence*, while two in *Number*, which is all that the Argument proves. If we conceive *Omnipresence* in the gross manner that this Author does, *i. e.* by way of Extension (of which above) yet, as he allows Substance to be co-extended with Substance and a Penetration of Dimensions, by what Logick can he prove that one infinite Extension must exclude another, any more than it excludes finite? <sup>2</sup>

*Ans.*

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<sup>2</sup> “ Another Argument for the Unity is taken from the Im-  
 “ mensity of God; and the Strength of it seems to lie in this,  
 “ that we cannot suppose Two or more Beings every where pre-  
 “ sent,



9. "LIMITATION of Existence, with respect to Ch. VI.  
 "Place, does necessarily infer *Limitation of Power*,  
 " &c. which is incompatible with the Nature and  
 " Idea of God, or a necessarily existent Being. The  
 " Power of God can only be exercised where *He is*,  
 " or where his Being or Substance (in which his  
 " Power is inherent) is present. *Power*, which is  
 " a *Property*, cannot exist where the Substance of  
 " which it is the Property does not exist; and  
 " God cannot *act where He is not*, any more than  
 " He can act without existing; and He has no Ex-  
 " istence *where He is not*. So that *Two* or more  
 " necessarily-existent Beings, *limited* in their Pre-  
 " sence or Place of Existence, must be also limited  
 " with respect to *Power* and the Sphere of Action\*."

*Ans.* THE Perfections of Power, Knowledge,  
 &c. having no relation to Place, or Extension, it

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" sent, or perfectly in the very same Place, without destroying the  
 " Nature of them, and making them extended and unextended,  
 " penetrable and impenetrable, at the same time. But when we  
 " reason concerning the Existence of Spirits and immaterial Sub-  
 " stances in Place, we reason upon inadequate Ideas, and are  
 " forced to employ improper Terms. The manner of their existing  
 " is so wholly different from that of Bodies, that we can have  
 " no imaginable Ground for drawing Conclusions in one Case to  
 " the other. This, however, seems in itself a very clear and rea-  
 " sonable Conclusion, that, if *Two* Beings may be any where in  
 " the same Place, it implies no Repugnancy in the Nature of the  
 " thing, but that *Two* or more Beings, supposing them infinite,  
 " may be every where in the same Place. Now granting the  
 " Immateriality of thinking Beings, and that there is no Place  
 " from which God is excluded, we are under an absolute Ne-  
 " cessity of supposing that immaterial Substances not only may,  
 " but do in fact, somewhere co-exist; and, tho' after a manner un-  
 " known to us, perfectly in the same Place: From whence this  
 " Argument to prove the Unity from the Immensity of God, as  
 " it denotes his Omnipresence, has been thought by learned  
 " Men insufficient to the End for which it is produced." *Fiddes*.  
*Theol. Spec.* p. 97.

\* *Existence and Unity*, p. 124, 125.

Ch. VI. can never be proved that the Being, of which these  
 are Properties, has any ; or that its being confined  
 to a particular part of Space (if that could be sup-  
 posed) has any Connection with a Limitation in  
 the Degree of these and the like unextended Per-  
 fections ; as has been made appear in the third  
 and fourth Chapters, where this Argument is an-  
 swer'd at large, and the Difficulties shewn to be  
 at least equal on this Author's Hypothesis of an in-  
 finitely extended Deity. v. g. It may be ask'd, with  
 as much Reason, Whether he can *act* where only  
 a *Part* of him exists ? Or, Whether any one *Part*  
 has the Power, Knowledge, &c. of the *Whole* ?  
 It may be asserted, that the whole Deity must act  
 on the least Portion of the Universe, which can only  
 be commensurate to a Part of his Substance, and  
 consequently all the other Parts of it must *act*  
*where they are not.*

THESE and the like insuperable Difficulties,  
 which have been shewn to attend this Author's No-  
 tion of the Divine Omnipresence, one would think  
 sufficient to discourage any Person from insisting up-  
 on it exclusive of all others, or from pretending to  
 dive at all into the *Modus* of that Being which is  
 acknowledg'd to be incomprehensible.

Mr. JACKSON's last Argument is this :

10. " IF Space exists at all, it is necessarily exist-  
 " ent and *absolutely immense*, in an uniform manner :  
 " And being so, whether it be taken for a *Property*  
 " a *Substance*, (and it must be one or the other, or  
 " there being nothing *real* which is neither *Sub-*  
 " *stance* nor *Property*) it infers a necessarily exist-  
 " ent and *uniformly immense* Being. But to sup-  
 " pose *Two* or more such *uniformly immense* Beings,  
 " is to suppose *Two* or more *immense* necessarily  
 " existent *Spaces* ; which is an evident Contradicti-  
 " on ; because, being *uniform* and *similar*, they must  
 " co-incide and become *One*, even whilst we are en-  
 " deavouring

“deavouring to suppose them *Two*, or more than *One* <sup>b</sup>.” Ch. VI.

1. THIS Author knows very well that we do not allow Space to be either *Substance* or *Property*, or any Thing *real*; we say 'tis only an *abstract Idea*, and therefore infers nothing more than a Power in the Mind of making such Ideas; and we have given our Reasons for saying so at large.

BUT, 2. Supposing this Space to be either a Substance or Property, why may not other Substances or Properties be commensurate to or co-extended with it, as well as they are co-existent with each other? The Difficulty is the same in both Cases, as was observ'd under the eighth Demonstration. If therefore by their *co-inciding* our Author here means the same as being *identified*, we deny it; If he means only co-existing, in the same Place, of which Identity is the Consequence, then we deny that Consequence. He himself supposes some *Part* of God's Substance to co-incide with the *Moon*, to be co-extended with it, and compresential to it. The *Moon* is present where that *Part* is also present; and so far the two Substances, according to him, must *co-incide*; and yet they do not exclude each other, nor become numerically *One*; and therefore from *Co-incidence* of Presence to *numerical Unity*, or absolute Identity, *non valet Consequentia*.

THUS I have endeavour'd to give a plain and satisfactory Answer to this Author's Arguments, and have omitted none that I know of, tho' I did not pursue him Paragraph by Paragraph; which, 'twas conceiv'd, would make the Work too confus'd, as well as too long and tedious, for the generality of Readers. I have not designedly used him

Ch. VI. ill, or endeavour'd any where to misrepresent his Meaning. I shall make no other Excuse for attempting to overturn the Principles on which Dr. Clarke's celebrated Demonstrations are founded, beside the Love of Truth, and Pleasure of detecting Fallacies, especially in Subjects of so great Importance as those that concern the Being and Attributes of God. The Learned know very well what Uses have been or may be made of these Principles against some of the prime Articles, nay, the very Foundation both of Natural <sup>c</sup> and Reveald Religion. The Consequences of the *Argument a priori* afford sufficient Matter of Apology for enquiring into this dark Subject; but these are fully set forth in the following Dissertation; from which I'm unwilling to detain the Reader any longer.

Mr. JACKSON's *Appendix*, concerning the Ground and Obligation of *Morality*, will shortly be examin'd by another Hand.

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<sup>c</sup> I should be glad to see a clear Answer to what has been objected by a thoughtful Writer; that "The Supposition of such an absolutely unlimited, and, as it were, *antecedent* Necessity, from which some derive their main Proof of an *absolute Infinity*, leads directly to *Pantheism*, or tends to oblige us, with *Spinoza* (who likewise supposed such an absolutely unlimited Necessity to support his *absolutely infinite* Nature) to infer, that all *Action*, as well as *Existence*, is absolutely necessary. For, it is plain, that an independent and absolutely *unlimited* Necessity cannot be confined or *limited* to the Divine *Existence*, but must extend itself likewise to the Divine *Action*, and even to our own both *Existence* and *Action*. But this Inference would deprive us of the Subject on which we are going to treat, by destroying the very Notion of *Religion*." Mr. Collier on *Natural and Revealed Religion*, Pref. p. 9, 10.





A  
DISSERTATION  
UPON THE  
*Argument a Priori*

For proving the EXISTENCE of a  
FIRST CAUSE.

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In a LETTER to Mr. LAW.

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SIR,



WHEN I last had the pleasure of  
your Conversation, in company  
with one or two more ingenious  
Friends, I remember we soon fell  
to asking each other, What News  
from the *Republick of Letters* ;  
What fresh *Pamphlets* stirring ;  
What Works, relating either to *Religion* or *Sci-  
ence*, had appeared lately, or were soon likely to  
appear.

## Introduction.

appear. Hereupon several Things were mention'd, and pass'd off in Discourse : But what we happen'd more particularly to dwell upon, was the Consideration of some Metaphysical Pieces concerning the proving the Existence of a Deity *a priori* (as the Schools term it) that is to say, from some supposed *antecedent* Necessity, considered as a *Ground*, or *Reason*, or *Foundation*, or *internal Cause*, or *formal Cause* of the Divine Existence. And here, if I remember, we were inquisitive to know, what those Scholastick Terms *imported*, and whether the Thought contain'd in them was entirely *new*, a recent Product of the eighteenth Century ; as also what Weight or Solidity there was in it : And if there were none, Whether it portended any Detriment to *Religion*, or *Science*, and might be worth the opposing or confuting. Upon the debating and canvassing the Particulars now mention'd, my Opinion then was, and I am since more and more confirm'd in the same, that 'Those who have appeared as Advocates for that Argument *a priori*, seem to have had no clear Notion of the Thing itself, or of the Terms they make use of ; that the *Thought* however was not a *new Thought*, tho' perhaps it might be justly called a *new Tenet*, as having been constantly exploded for many Centuries upwards, and never once maintain'd by *Metaphysicians* or *Divines* ; that moreover it was absolutely untenable, yea and carried its own Confutation along with it, as soon as understood ; and lastly, that such Principles might be prejudicial, in some measure, both to *Religion* and *Science*, if they should happen to prevail ; and that consequently it would be doing good Service to Both, if due Care were taken, in a proper manner, to prevent their Growth.

WITH these Sentiments (which seem'd also to be pretty nearly the common Sentiments of all then present)

present) I departed from you at that time. And no sooner was I return'd to my Books, and had some vacant Leisure on my hands, but I thought of throwing out what occurred to me on those Heads into Paper, digesting it into a kind of Dissertation, which I here send you for your Perusal, and which I leave entirely to your Disposal. The Method, which I have chalk'd out for my self, in the Essay here following, is ;

- I. To give some *Historical* Account of what the most eminent *Metaphysicians* and *Divines* have taught, so far as concerns the Point in Question.
- II. To consider the *Argumentative* Part, in order to take off the Ambiguity of *Words*, and thereby to prevent Confusion of *Ideas*.
- III. To examine into the *Tendency* of the new Tenets, with respect either to *Religion*, or *Science*.

THESE Three Heads will furnish out so many distinct Sections, or Chapters.





## C H A P. I.

*Containing an Historical View of what Metaphysicians or Divines have formerly taught, so far as concerns the Argument a Priori for the Divine Existence.*

I SHALL begin with Two antient *Theists*, Both of the same time, or nearly, and Both declaring against the Possibility of demonstrating *a Priori* the Existence of a Deity, or First Cause. One of them was a *Christian Divine*, and the other an acute *Pagan Philosopher*.

THE Christian Divine was *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, who flourish'd about *A. D.* 192. He expresses himself thus in *Dr. Cudworth's* <sup>a</sup> Translation :

“ G O D is the most difficult Thing of all to be  
 “ discoursed of : Because, since the *Principle* of  
 “ every thing is hard to find out, the *first* and most  
 “ antient Principle of all, which was the Cause to  
 “ all other Things of their being made [and of  
 “ their Continuance after they were made] must  
 “ needs be the hardest of all to be declared, or  
 “ manifested. ----- But neither can [God] be  
 “ apprehended by any demonstrative Science : For

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<sup>a</sup> Cudworth *Intellect. Syst.* p. 716.



“ such Science is from Things *before* [in order of  
“ Nature] and more knowable ; whereas nothing  
“ can exist *before* that which is altogether un-  
“ made <sup>b</sup> [or self-existent.] ”

THE other antient *Theist* is *Alexander Aphrodisiensis*, a celebrated *Peripatetick*, who flourish'd between *A. D.* 199, and 211. <sup>c</sup> After he had proposed an Argument for the Existence of a First Cause, drawn from the Consideration of *Motion*, according to the *Aristotelick* Principles, he proceeds to observe as follows : “ This Argument [or Proof] “ is in the way of *Analysis* only, it being not possible that there should be a [strict] *Demonstration* “ of the *First Principle* of all : Wherefore we “ must here fetch our Beginning from things that “ are *after* it and *manifest*, and thence by way of “ *Analysis* ascend to the Proof of that *First Nature* “ *ture* which was before them. <sup>d</sup> ” So *Dr. Cudworth* renders the Passage : And the Reflection or Comment, which he makes upon what has here been quoted from these two antient *Theists*, is in these Words : “ The true meaning of those antient *Theists*, who denied that there could be “ any *Demonstration* of a *God*, was only This, that “ the Existence of a *God* could not be demon-

<sup>b</sup> Ναὶ μὲν ὁ δυσμεταχειριστά τις περὶ θεῶν λόγος ἔστίς ἐστιν· ἔπειτα ἡ ἀρχὴ πάντος πράγματος δυσεύρετος, πάντως πρὶν ἢ πρώτη καὶ προεστυπότε ἀρχὴ δυνάμεως, ἢ τις πρὸς ἄλλοις ἁπασιν αἰτία· ὅτι γενεᾷ καὶ γινομένοις εἶναι. — Αλλ' ἔδὲ ἐπιστήμη λαμβάνεται τῇ ἀποδείκνυ· αὕτη ἡ ἐκ προτέρων καὶ γνωριμωτέρων συνέσταται· ὅτι δὲ ἀγενήτου ἔδην προὔπαρχει. *Clem. Alex.* p. 696. Edit. Oxon.

<sup>c</sup> See an Account of him in *Fabricius.* *Bibl. Græc. Lib. IV.* cap. 25. p. 62.

<sup>d</sup> Ἡ δὲ εἰς κατὰ αἰάλυσιν· ὅτι οἶοντι τῆς πρώτης ἀρχῆς ἀπόδειξιν εἶναι· ἀλλὰ διὰ τὸ ὑπέραν τε καὶ φανερῶν ἀρξαμένους, κατὰ τὴν πρὸς ταῦτα συμφωνίαν ἀναλύσει χρωμένους συστήσῃ τὴν ἐκείνου φύσιν. *Aphrodif. Physic. Schol. lib. I. c. I.*

“ *Arated*

Ch. I. "strated *a priore*, Himself being the *First Cause*  
 "of all Things."

SUCH were the Sentiments of *Metaphysicians* and *Divines* at that time, founded upon plain and cogent Reason, such as must equally hold at all times, and such as seem to evince, not that the Existence of a *First Cause* may be demonstrated *a priori*, but rather that it is really demonstrable *a priori*, if not self-evident, that no such Proof can be made, being indeed contradictory and impossible, repugnant to the very Nature or Notion of a *First Cause*. But I shall speak to the *Argumentative* Part afterwards : I am now upon the *Historical*. It is certain that the *Fathers* of the Church, *Greek* or *Latin*, never admitted any such Proof *a priori* of the Divine Existence, but either directly or indirectly, either expressly or implicitly, condemned it all along. It would be tedious to enter into a particular Detail of their Sentiments, in relation to the Proof of the Existence : I shall content myself with one general Observation, That they had not so much as the *Terms* or *Phrases* of *Necessary-Existence*, or *Necessity of Existence*, but utterly rejected the very Name of *Necessity*, as not applicable to the *Deity* at all, understanding it constantly in its antient, proper, *compulsive* Sense.\* Now, it is very well known, that the supposed Proof *a priori*, lately contended for, is built in a manner entirely upon the Word *Necessity*, and instantly sinks without it. For, put *immutable*, or *natural*, or *independent*, or *emphatical* Existence (according to the antient way) instead of *necessary* Existence, or *Necessity* of Existence, and then it is certain that the very *Medium*

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\* See Waterland's *Second Defense*, Qu. VIII. p. 252, &c.  
*Preface to Sermons*, p. 21.



of the whole Argument drops and vanishes, and there is not so much as any Colour or Appearance of the Proof left. I say then, since it is undoubted Fact that the *Fathers* all along admitted of no such Terms as *Necessary* or *Necessity*, in this case, but rejected them as not applicable either to the Divine *Existence*, or *Attributes*; it is very plain, that they therewith rejected any such pretended Argument *a priori*, as has been since raised from those *Terms*.

To shew how late it was before *Necessity* gain'd admittance in the Church, and became as it were christianized, with respect to our present Subject, I may observe that Archbishop *Anselm*<sup>f</sup> of the eleventh and twelfth Century, yea and *Alexander Hales*<sup>g</sup> of the thirteenth, were yet scrupulous of making

<sup>f</sup> Deus nihil facit *necessitate*, quia nullo modo cogitur aut prohibetur aliquid facere. Et cum dicimus Deum aliquid facere quasi *necessitate* vitandæ inhonestatis, quam utique non timet, potius intelligendum est quod facit *necessitate* servandæ honestatis: Quæ scilicet *necessitas* non est aliud quam *immutabilitas* honestatis ejus, quam a seipso & non ab alio habet; & idcirco *improprie* dicitur *necessitas*. *Anselm. Opp. Tom. III. p. 55.*

<sup>g</sup> Ad aliud vero quod objicitur de *necessitate* bonitatis, dicendum est quod nomen *necessitatis* non congrue hic dicitur de Deo. Unde *Anselm. In Deo nulla cadit necessitas*. *Necessitas* enim videtur dicere *coactionem*. Sed nec est *necessitas utilitatis* a parte sua, sicut habitum est in præcedente autoritate. Si vero dicatur *necessitas congruitatis*, sive *idoneitatis*, sicut tangitur in quadam autoritate, tunc potest dici quod ex *necessitate* bonitatis condidit res. Non tamen videtur congruere quod dicatur ex *necessitate natura*: Licet enim sit idem bonitas quod natura ejus, tamen si diceretur ex *necessitate natura*, videretur poni talis *necessitas* qualis est in rebus naturalibus. In rebus enim naturalibus ignis ex *necessitate natura* generat ignem, & homo hominem: non sic autem est cum creaturæ fiunt a Deo. *Alex. Alens. Part II. p. 15.*

N. B. *This Author flourish'd about 1230, died 1245. Alber-  
tus Magnus, who flourish'd about 1260, and died in 1280,  
made*

Ch. I.  making use of the Term, and were very tender of applying it to the divine *Acts* or *Attributes*, except it were with great Caution, Awe, and Reserve ; at the same time owning the Word to be both harsh and improper. And as to applying it to the divine *Existence*, I do not find that they ventured upon it at all ; tho' others frequently did it afterwards in the Decline of the thirteenth Century, and downwards, when *Aristotle's* Metaphysicks, translated into barbarous *Latin*, and the *Arabian* Philosophy (of *Avicen*, *Averroez*, and *Algazel*) had paved the way for it.<sup>n</sup>

LET us see however, how this matter stood after those improper Terms were brought in, and soften'd into a qualify'd Sense ; whether any *Schoolmen* or others (now they might seem to have some handle for it) ever attempted to draw out any such Argument *a priori* for the Existence of a First Cause, and to commend the same as true and solid Reasoning. I would here observe by the way, that the *Schoolmen*, though they deservedly lie under a Disrepute for their Excesses in many things, may yet be justly look'd upon as carrying great

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*made no Scruple of applying the Word necessary, or necessity (in a sober but new Sense) to the divine Essence or Existence : And it is very plain that he learn'd that Language from Aristotle's Philosophy, to which he refers for his sense of those Terms. See Albert. Mag. Comment. in L. I. Sentent. Dist. VI. Opp. Vol. XIV. p. 121. Edit. Lugd.*

<sup>n</sup> Quievit autem & siluit philosophia *Aristotelis*, pro majori parte, — usque post tempora *Mahometi*, quando *Avicenna* & *Averroes* & cæteri revocaverunt philosophiam *Aristotelis* in lucem plenam expositionis. Et licet alia logicalia & quædam alia translata fuerunt per *Boetium* de *Græco*, tamen tempore *Michaelis Scoti*, qui annis Dom. 1230 transactis apparuit, deferens librorum *Aristotelis* partes aliquas, &c. remagnificata est philosophia *Aristotelis* apud Latinos. *Rog. Bacon*, p. 37. Conf. p. 45, 262, 420.

Authority



Authority with them in a point of this Nature, where they had no Byas to mislead them, (being inclined to the side of *Theism*) and where a Question turn'd upon a right understanding of *Technical* Terms or Phrases, and a thorough Acquaintance with *Logick*, and *Metaphysicks*; being a matter of pure abstract Reasoning. They were undoubtedly great Masters in that way: For where they argued barely upon the Principles of Reason (as a very judicious Writer observes) they have often done exceeding well, and have improved natural Reason to an uncommon Height.<sup>i</sup> And I will venture to add, that if the sharpest Wits of these later Days shall undertake, upon their own Stock, to furnish out a new Scheme of *School-Divinity*, or *Metaphysical Theology*, it will be a long while, perhaps some Centuries, before they arrive to such Perfection in some part as many of the *Schoolmen* arriv'd to; unless they shall be content within a while to take those despised School-men into Consultation with them, and to extract the best Things from them. This I hint by the way, in order to remove Prejudices, with respect to my citing (as I am now going to do) *School-men* in this Cause; tho' I intend not to cite them only, but other the most judicious and learned *Divines* and *Metaphysicians*, who have come after them, and have entirely agreed in this Article with them. However, as I have already intimated, the *Schoolmen* are most certainly proper Judges within their own Province; and in a point of *School-Divinity*: And this which we are now upon is very plainly such, as the pretended Argument *a priori* proceeds altogether upon *Scholastick* Terms, and is managed in a *Scholastick* way, and therefore must at length stand or

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<sup>i</sup> *Reflections upon Learning*, p. 217, 227.

Ch. I. fall by *Scholastick* Principles, and *Scholastick* Reasonings. These Things premised, I may now proceed in the *Historical View*, according to order of Time, beginning from those Days when *Necessary Existence*, with other the like Terms or Phrases, had gotten some Footing in the Christian Theology.

### A. D. 1260. ALBERTUS MAGNUS.

ALBERTUS, surnamed the *Great*, on account of his great Learning and Abilities, was one of the most considerable among the *Divines* or *Metaphysicians* of the Age he lived in. He was one of the first (I mean, among *Christian* Writers) that took upon him to give God the *Metaphysical* Title of a *necessary* Being. Yet he presumed not to found any Argument *a priori* for the Existence upon it, but denied expressly, or in Words equivalent, that any Argument of that kind could be made. He allows, that upon the Foot of mere natural Light, God may be known *a posteriori* by the *Creatures*, and no otherwise<sup>k</sup>: For, he admits it as a true Principle, that a *Philosopher* can search out God no other way than by the *Creatures*, as a *Cause* is known from the *Effect*<sup>l</sup>. Which amounts to the same with saying, that Philosophy affords no Proof *a priori*.

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<sup>k</sup> Posita creatura tanquam effectu dei, necesse est deum creatorem poni: & sic *a posteriori* ex creatura potest deus cognosci. *Albert. Magn.* in Lib. I. Sentent. Dist. III. Opp. Tom. xiv. p. 66.

<sup>l</sup> Philosophus non investigat eum in philosophia nisi per creaturas, sicut causam per effectum. *Ibid.* p. 55.

A. D. 1270. THOMAS AQUINAS.

FROM the Master or Præceptor I may next descend to the Scholar, who was almost twenty Years younger than *Albertus*, but died some Years before him, namely, in the Year 1274. I need say nothing of the Fame or the Abilities of *Aquinas*, surnamed (according to the fashion of those Times) the *Angelical Doctor*. He frequently enough makes use of the Phrases of *necessary Being*, or *Necessity of existing*, but yet never builds any Argument *a priori* for the Existence upon it, but constantly maintains, that every Proof of the Existence is *a posteriori*, from the Effects. In one Place he writes thus, " There are two kinds of " *Demonstration*. The first is by the *Cause*, and " has its Name from shewing *why* the thing is, " and it proceeds upon something *simply prior*. " The second is by the *Effect*, and has its Name " from shewing *that* the thing is, and it proceeds " upon things *prior* with *respect* to us. ——— Now " the Existence of God, as it is not knowable in " *itself*, is demonstrable to us by the *Effects* to us " known. <sup>m</sup> " That is to say, the Existence of God cannot be demonstrated *a priori*, but *a posteriori* only : And so the Title of that Article explains it <sup>n</sup>, in some Editions of his *Sum*. In ano-

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^m Duplex est demonstratio. Una quæ est per *causam*, & dicitur *propter quid* ; & hæc est per *priora simpliciter* : Alia est per *effectum*, & dicitur demonstratio *quia* ; & hæc est per ea quæ sunt priora *quoad nos*. ——— Unde deum esse secundum quod non est per se notum, *quoad nos* demonstrabile est per effectus nobis notos. *Aquin. Summ. Q. II. Art. 2. p. 14. Edit. Lugd. 1588.*

ⁿ Deum esse, quamvis non *a priori*, *a posteriori* tamen demonstrari potest ex aliquo ejus notiori nobis *effectu*. *Aquin. Summ. Q. II. Art. 2. p. 4. Edit. Paris. 1615.*

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ther Work, *Aquinas* maintains the same thing in Words somewhat different, thus : “ In Arguments brought to prove the *Existence* of the Deity, it is not proper to argue from the *divine Essence*, or from *what he is*, but instead thereof to argue from the *Effects*, like as in the Demonstrations *a posteriori* : And from some such *Effect* is the Name of *God* taken. °” I use a little Liberty in rendering his Words, to make his Sense appear the clearer. It is very plain from Both the Passages here cited, that he utterly rejected all Arguments *a priori* for the proving the *Existence* of a Deity. Yet I shall not conceal from you, that he elsewhere argues from *Necessary-Existence* to the *Eternity* of the Divine Being^p ; which may be thought to be arguing *a priori*. I will not say, that it is not arguing *a priori* : But then it is not arguing from *Attribute* to *Existence*, but from one Attribute to another, from Existence and one or more Attributes before proved, to an Attribute not yet proved ; which is a fair and just way of Reasoning, and may perhaps not improperly be called arguing *a priori* ; though some would scruple the giving it that Title. However, as to this By-point, I shall have occasion to say more in the Sequel, and so may dismiss it for the present, and proceed in my Method.

° In rationibus autem in quibus demonstratur deum esse, non oportet assumi pro medio divinam essentiam, sive quidditatem, sed loco quidditatis accipitur pro medio *effectus*, sicut accidit in demonstrationibus *quia* ; & ex hujusmodi effectu sumitur ratio hujus nominis *deus*. *Aquin. Summ. contr. Gentiles*, L. I. c. 12. p. 14. Edit. Lugd. 1587.

^p Oportet ponere aliquod *primum necessarium* quod est *per se ipsum* necessarium ; & hoc est *deus*, cum sit *prima causa* ut dictum est : igitur *deus aternus* est cum omne *necessarium per se*, sit *eternum*. *Aquin. contr. Gentil.* L. I. c. 14. p. 21.

A. D. 1276. ROGER BACON.

ROGER BACON, of the Order of *Friars Minor*, was a Person of strong Parts, and clear Judgment, and had perhaps a greater Compass of Erudition than any other of that Age. He was stiled the *Admirable Doctor*, after the way of giving Titles at that time. It will not be improper to shew what his Judgment was upon the present Question, as he occasionally delivered it. “ In “ *Metaphysicks* there can be no *Demonstration* “ made but by arguing from the *Effect* : Because “ Things *Spiritual* are discovered by the *sensible* “ *Effects*, and the *Creator* by the *Creature*, as is “ manifest in that Science.^a ” From which Words it is plain that he rejects all Pretence to arguing *a priori* in the Question of the *Existence*, and allows of nothing in that case, but the Proofs *a posteriori* only.

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A. D. 1290. RICHARDUS DE MEDIA VILLA.

RICHARD of MIDDLETON was a Man famous in his Time, dignified with the Title of the *Solid Doctor*. His Determination of the Question about proving the Existence *a priori*, is clear and full ; as here follows : “ There is one kind “ of *Demonstration propter quid* [from *antece-* “ *dent Reason*] in which what belongs to the Sub- “ ject is demonstrated by its *Cause* : And there is

^a In metaphysicis non potest fieri demonstratio nisi per effectum : quoniam inveniuntur spiritualia per corporales effectus, & creator per creaturam, sicut patet in illa scientia. *Rog. Bacon. Opus majus.* p. 62. Edit. Jebb. 1733.

“ another

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“ another kind of Demonstration *quia* [from subsequent Reason] in which the Cause is demonstrated by the *Effect*. In the former way of Demonstration, I say, we cannot demonstrate the Existence of God, because the divine Existence has no *Cause* prior to found such Proof of the Existence upon : But in the latter way of Proof from the *Effect*, I assert that we can demonstrate the Existence of the Deity by variety of Arguments. ^r” Here we may observe, as likewise in the three Authorities before cited ; that it was not thro’ Haste, Oversight, or Forgetfulness, that they avoided arguing *a priori* in that Instance, but thro’ deep Consideration and Judgment. They had all thought of the thing, and very deliberately rejected it, as amounting to a palpable Absurdity, making a Cause *prior* to the *First*.

I MAY further take notice, that this Author has besides, a whole Chapter about the conceivable or notional *Order* of the Divine Attributes well worth the Perusal, for the right understanding how, or in what Sense one may be said to argue *a priori* from *Existence* to *Attributes*, or from *Attribute* to *Attribute*. I shall cite some Parts of that Chapter for a Specimen ^f : But the whole deserves a Reader’s

^r Est quædam demonstratio *propter quid*, qua demonstratur passio de subiecto *per causam* : Et est quædam demonstratio *quia*, in qua demonstratur causa *per effectum*. Loquendo de prima demonstratione, dico, quod non possumus *demonstrare* deum esse, quia *esse dei* causam non habet, per quam possumus ipsum demonstrare de deo : Loquendo de demonstratione quæ est *per effectum*, sic dico quod possumus demonstrare deum esse multipliciter. *Rich. de Med. Vill.* in IV Libr. Sentent. L. I. Dist. iii. Q. 3. p. 41.

^f Non est inconueniens ponere quod inter divina attributa sit aliquis ordo *secundum rationem* intelligendi, in quantum intellectus noster *priorem* conceptionem de uno facit quam de alio. Unde

a Reader's careful notice, for the solid Judgment appearing in it. The Sum is, that the Divine *Existence* is considered in the first Place, and after That, the *Attributes* in their most natural Order of Conception. And when they are so placed or ranked, we may argue from them in that *Order*; and such arguing may, without Impropriety, be stiled Arguing *a priori*, as arguing from something *antecedent*, in natural order of Conception, to something *subsequent* in Conception to it. I know not whether the judicious Author has marshall'd the Attributes with the utmost Exactness, or has assign'd to every one of them its most proper Place: But he appears to have determined very right in the main Point, and to have digested every thing with a kind of masterly Hand. Had those matters been considered always with the like Care and Judgment, there could have been no Room for arguing

Unde prius in nostra ratione intelligendi est *divinum esse* quam aliquod *attributum* ejus, & *intelligere* quam *velle*, & attributa respicientia *intellectum* priusquam respicientia *voluntatem*. —inter suas perfectiones *priores* sunt, in nostra ratione intelligendi, illæ quæ respiciunt ipsum in quantum est *essentia*, quam illæ quæ respiciunt ipsum in quantum est *vita*: Et inter primas, prior est *unitas*, secunda *simplicitas*; communior est enim ratio unitatis quam simplicitatis: omnis enim *simplex* unum est, sed non convertitur &c. ——— Ratio summæ *simplicitatis* & *unitatis* sunt in divina essentia ratio *infininitatis*: Et ista tria, ratio *immutabilitatis*; & immutabilitas cum prædictis, sunt ratio *eternitatis*. Unde inferius per divinæ essentiæ *simplicitatem* probabitur in divina essentia esse *infininitas*, & per divinam *simplicitatem* & *infininitatem*, *immutabilitas*, & per immutabilitatem *eternitas*. Inter perfectiones etiam quæ conveniunt deo in quantum est *vita*, priores sunt illæ, in nostra ratione intelligendi, quæ respiciunt *ipsum intelligere*, quam illæ quæ respiciunt *ipsum velle*; & inter primas, prior *veritas* quam *sapientia*. ——— Inter perfectiones quæ respiciunt divinum *velle*, prima est *bonitas*, secunda *miseriordia*, tertia *justitia*. Ricard. de med. Vill. Lib. I. Dist. 2. Q. 4. p. 32, 33.

a priori

Ch. I. *a priori* to the Existence at all, nor for arguing to any *Attribute* from any thing conceived as *antecedent*, in order of Nature, to the Existence. But *Existence* and some *Attributes* may rationally be conceived as *antecedent*, in order of Nature, to other *Attributes* : And this kind of arguing *a priori*, which is reasonable, ought not to be confounded with the other, which is manifestly ὑστερον πρότερον, and palpably absurd. But I pass on.

A.D. 1301. JOHANNES DUNS SCOTUS.

JOHANNES DUNS, surnamed SCOTUS, and dignified with the Title of *Doctor Subtilis*, was considerable enough to support a kind of Rivalship against *Thomas Aquinas*, and to be Founder of a new Sect or Division among the School-men. However, their Difference in other Points makes their Authority the greater as to those Articles in which they agree : And it is certain that both *Thomists* and *Scotists* do agree in condemning and rejecting all Argumentation *a priori* in Proof of the *Existence* of a First Cause, as manifestly absurd. *Scotus* declares in express Words, that it is not possible for us to demonstrate as from a Cause, or antecedent Principle [*propter quid*] the *Existence* of an infinite Being, but that we may demonstrate it *a posteriori* [*demonstratione quia*] from Effects, namely from the *Creatures*. * He further observes and proves, that the First Cause is absolutely *uncaused*, having neither *external* nor *internal* Cause ; neither *efficient*, nor *final*, nor

* De Ente infinito non potest demonstrari esse *propter quid* quantum ad nos (licet ex natura terminorum propositio esset demonstrabilis *propter quid*) Sed quantum ad nos propositio est demonstrabilis demonstratione *quia*, ex creaturis. *Scot. in Libr. Sentent. L. I. Dist. II. Q. 2. p. 28.*

material, nor *formal*, and consequently none at all. His Reasoning is indeed wrapp'd up in a most wretched Style, and very barbarous *Latin* : But it may perhaps be thrown into intelligible *English*, and will be found to contain excellent Sense. It runs thus : “^v If the First Cause is above any *efficient* Cause, it must of consequence be absolutely “ *uncaused*, since it cannot have any other kind of “ Cause, as *final*, or *material*, or *formal*. As to “ *final* Cause, that it cannot have any such, is proved “ thus : Inasmuch as it has no *efficient* Cause, it “ follows of course that it can have no *final* : Because a *Final* Cause is no more than a *metaphorical* Cause, moving the *efficient* to act ; nor does “ the Existence of the Thing so caused essentially “ depend upon it, as prior to it, in any other “ view. Now nothing can be justly look'd upon “ as a Cause in itself, unless the Thing caused essentially depends upon it as prior to it ; [which “ cannot be said of a *final* Cause.]

“ As to the other two Consequences before “ hinted (that if a Being has no *efficient* Cause,

^v Si illud primum est *ineffectibile*, ergo erit *incausabile* ; quia non *finibile*, nec *materiabile*, nec *formabile*. Probatur prima consequentia, videlicet quod si est *ineffectibile* ergo non est *finibile*, quia causa *finalis* non causat, nisi quia metaphorice movet ipsum *efficiens* ad efficiendum : nam non alio modo dependet ab ipso essentialiter entitas finiti, ut *a priore*. Nihil autem est causa *per se*, nisi ut ab ipso tanquam *a priore* essentialiter dependet causatum.

Dux autem alix consequentix (videlicet, quod si est *ineffectibile*, ergo *immateriabile* & non *formabile*) probantur simul : quia cujus non est causa *extrinseca*, ejus non est causa *intrinseca*. Quia causalitas causæ *extrinseca* dicit perfectionem sine imperfectione : causalitas autem causæ *intrinseca* necessario requirit *imperfectionem* annexam, quia causa *intrinseca* est *pars* causati. Ergo, ratio causæ *extrinseca* est naturaliter prior ratione causæ *intrinseca* : negato ergo priore, negatur posterius. Scot. *ibid.* p. 30.

Ch. I.  " it can have neither *material*, nor *formal*) They
 " follow of course, and are proved at the same
 " time : Because whatever is without any *external*
 " Cause, must of consequence be without any *inter-*
 " *nal* one. An *external* Cause carries with it a
 " *perfect* Causality, which is more than an *internal*
 " Cause does ; for an *internal* Cause carries *Imper-*
 " *fection* along with it, as being only a *Part* of
 " the 'Thing caused. Wherefore if there be no
 " room, as in this case, for an *external* Cause,
 " which naturally is *prior* to the *internal*, much
 " less can there be any for the *internal* Cause,
 " which presupposes the other." I have been forced
 to render the Passage paraphrastically, to make
 the Sense clear, and to do Justice to the Argument
 contained in it. It amounts to a Demonstration,
 that a *First Cause* must be absolutely, and in every
 view, *uncaused*. And I judged it worth the noting,
 because it has been sometimes suggested, that tho'
 absolute *Necessity* cannot be deem'd a Cause of a
 First Cause *by way of efficient Cause*, yet it may
by way of formal Cause be the ground of that
 Existence.* *Duns Scotus* has here effectually con-
 futed or obviated any such Thought, by observ-
 ing, that every *formal*, every *internal* Cause is but
 a *Part*, or a *partial* Conception of the Thing it-
 self, *presupposing* the Thing, and therefore pro-
 perly not prior in Conception to it, nor the Cause
 of it.

He has a second Argument in the same Place,
 to enforce the former, and it is to this Effect :
 That *internal* or *intrinsick* Causes owe their very
 Nature and Being as *Causes*, or as *constituent*
 Causes, to some *external* Efficient ; for they are

* See Dr. Clarke's *Answer to the sixth Letter*, p. 33. Edit. 6th.



not Causes in *in themselves*, but by the external *Agent* which makes them such. ^y Therefore where there is no external *efficient* Cause, there can be no *internal* Cause properly so call'd. The Force of the Argument, as I understand it, lies here : That *Matter* and *Form* (called *internal* Causes) are, in *themselves* considered, no more than constituent *parts* of the Compound, not *Causes* of it. It is their supposed relation to some external *Agency*, which alone makes them carry an Idea of *Causality* along with them. If therefore we suppose all external *Agency* or *Efficiency* to be away (as we must in this case, respecting the divine Being which has no *efficient* Cause) the very Idea of *Causality*, as to any *internal* Cause, ceases and vanishes at once ; it cannot be considered as a *Cause* at all. ^z Wherefore, any Being that is above having any *efficient* Cause is much more above any other kind of *Cause*, is absolutely *uncaused*, which was the Thing to be proved.

^y Aliter probantur eadem consequentiæ : quia causæ *intrinsecæ* sunt causatæ ab *extrinsecæ*, vel secundum esse earum, vel in quantum *causant* compositum, vel utroque modo. Quia causæ *intrinsecæ* non *seipsis*, sine *agente*, causant compositum, vel constituunt. Scot. *ibid.* p. 30.

^z The Argument may receive some Light from a Passage in Durandus, relating to this Head.

Quod compositum ex *materia* & *forma* causam habeat, patet ; habet enim duas causas *intrinsecas*, scilicet, *materiam* & *formam*, ex quibus componitur : habet etiam causam *efficientem*, quia unio *materiæ* & *formæ* fit per *agens* quod introducit *formam* in *materia*. Unde *Philosophus*, 8 *Metaphysicæ*, cum quaereret quare ex *materia* & *forma* fit unum, dicit, quod non est aliqua causa, nisi unum principium motus, quod est *causa agens*. Durand. Lib. I. Dist. viii. Q. 4. fol. 3. Edit. Paris.

A. D. 1591. GREGORIUS DE VA-
LENTIA.

Ch. I.



THIS Writer in his Commentaries upon *Aquinas's Sum*, expresses himself fully and clearly to our Purpose. "The Existence of God cannot be evidently shewn *a priori* : In this point *All are agreed*. For the Existence of the Deity admits of no Cause whereby it should be demonstrated *a priori*. Neither can it be demonstrated from the divine *Essence*, considered as prior in *Conception*. 1. Because the *Existence* of a Being ought not to be proved by the *Essence* of that Being, since the Question of the *Existence* [whether any thing is] must precede the other Question concerning the *Essence* [what it is] as *Aquinas* rightly observes. 2. Besides, the *Essence* of God is not sufficiently known to us." ^a

HERE it is observable, that this Author look'd upon it as a ruled Point, a Thing *universally agreed to*, that there neither was nor could be any Demonstration *a priori* of the Existence of God. It may be observed also by the way, that the Phrase of *Demonstratio a priori* was now become a more familiar Phrase than formerly. The elder Writers which I have cited, used to call it *Demonstratio*

^a Deum esse non potest evidenter demonstrari *a priori* : de hac inter omnes convenit. Nam *Dei esse* nullam habet *causam* per quam *a priori* demonstrari possit : neque etiam id potest demonstrari per *essentiam* & *quidditatem* Dei, tanquam per aliquid prius secundum rationem. 1. Quia *esse rei* non debet demonstrari per *quidditatem rei*, cum questio *an sit* prior sit questione *quid sit* ; ut recte D. Thom. *Etc.* 2. Nam quidditas Dei non satis est nobis nota. *Gregor. de Valent.* Tom. I. Disp. 1. Q. 2. p. 59. Edit. Lugd.

propter quid, answering to the Greek δι' ὧν. Both signify a Proof drawn from some prior Cause, or from something naturally, or in the natural order of Conception, antecedent to the Thing demonstrated by it. ^b *A posteriori* is just the Reverse. ^c

A. D. 1600. VASQUEZ.

GABRIEL VASQUEZ, another eminent School-man of that time, declares his Sentiments to the same Purpose ; that there can be no Demonstration *a priori* of the Existence of a Deity, but a *posteriori* only. ^d

A. D. 1614. SUAREZ.

SUAREZ, the famous Schoolman and Jesuit, deserves a more particular Consideration, because He really had a strong Inclination to make out Something that should look like an Argument *a priori*, or however should (for Ostentation sake, I suppose) be set forth with that Name : For, in reality, he expressly and absolutely condemn'd all Reasoning *a priori* to the existence of a Deity, as others before him had done ; and yet by a kind of artificial Turn, by interpreting the proof of the *Unity* so as to amount to the same with the proof of

^b Demonstratio *a priori* ea est qua probatur effectus per causam, sive proximam sive remotam, aut probatur conclusio per aliquod prius, sive sit causa, sive antecedens tantum. Chauvin. Lexic. p. 170.

^c Demonstratio *a posteriori* dicitur illa, qua vel probatur causa per effectum, vel conclusio per aliquod posterius, sive sit effectus sive consequens. Chauvin. ibid.

^d Deum esse, non potest *a priori* demonstrari : *A posteriori* tamen & per effectus demonstrari potest. Vasq. Q. 2. Art. 2. p. 60.
a Deity,

Ch. I.  a Deity, he conceived he had done the *Thing*, only by changing of *Names*. But let us observe how he managed the whole Affair : We shall see afterwards what Censures were passed upon it by the judicious, tho' it was mostly a difference in *Words*. He states the main Question thus : *Whether the Existence of God may in some Sort* [or, in some sense] *be demonstrated a priori* : * And he determines in the Affirmative. The whole Tenor of his Reasoning is as here follows. † “ We are first to premise that
“ abso-

* *Utrum aliquo modo possit a priori demonstrari deum esse. Suarez. Metaphys. Tom. 2. Disp. XXIX. Sect. 3. p. 28.*

† Supponendum est, simpliciter loquendo non posse demonstrari *a priori* deum esse ; quia neque deus habet *causam* sui esse, per quam *a priori* demonstratur, neque si haberet, ita exacte & perfecte a nobis cognoscitur deus, ut ex propriis principiis (ut sic dicam) illum assequamur. Quo sensu dixit *Dionysius*, capite septimo *dedivinis nominibus*, nos non posse deum ex propria natura cognoscere.

Quamquam vero hoc ita sit, nihilominus postquam *a posteriori* aliquid de deo demonstratum sit, possumus ex *uno attributo* demonstrare *a priori aliud* : ut si ex *immensitate*, v. g. concludamus *localem immutabilitatem*. Suppono enim ad ratiocinandum *a priori*, modo humano, sufficere distinctionem *rationis* inter attributa.

Resolutio Questionis. Ad hunc ergo modum dicendum est : Demonstrato *a posteriori* deum esse *Ens necessarium & a se*, ex hoc attributo posse *a priori* demonstrari, præter illud non posse esse *aliud ens necessarium & a se*, & consequenter demonstrari *deum esse*.

Dices, Ergo ex *quidditate* dei cognita, demonstratur deum esse, quia *quidditas* dei est quod sit *ens necessarium & a se* : hoc autem plane repugnat, quia quæstio *Quid est* supponit quæstionem *An est* ; ut recte ad hoc propositum notavit divus *Thomas*. I. Part. Q. 2. Art. 2. ad secund.

Respondeo, Formaliter ac proprie loquendo, non demonstrari *esse dei* per *quidditatem* dei ut sic, quod recte argumentum probat ; sed ex quodam *attributo* (quod re ipsa est essentia dei, a nobis autem abstractius concipitur ut *modus entis non-causati*) colligi *aliud attributum*, & ita concludi illud ens esse *deum*. Unde ad
conclu-

“ absolutely speaking, The Existence of God *can-*
 “ *be proved a priori* ; as well because God has *no*
 “ *Cause* of his Existence whereby it should be prov’d
 “ *a priori*, as also because if he had, yet we have
 “ no such exact and perfect Knowledge of God as
 “ might enable us to trace Him up (if I may so
 “ speak) to his own proper principles. To which
 “ purpose *Dionysius* (in his seventh Chapter of the
 “ *divine Names*) observes, that *we cannot know*
 “ *God according to his proper Nature.*

“ But tho’ that be so as I have here said, yet
 “ notwithstanding, after we have once demonstrat-
 “ ed *a posteriori* something concerning God, we
 “ may go on to demonstrate *a priori* one *Attribute*
 “ from another : As for Instance, when we infer
 “ *Unchangeableness of Place* from the *Omnipre-*
 “ *sence* before proved. I suppose all the while,
 “ that a *notional* distinction of the divine *Attri-*
 “ *butes* (after an human way of Conception) is
 “ Foundation sufficient for reasoning *a priori*.

“ Now, for the Resolution of the *Question*, I
 “ proceed thus : Having demonstrated *a posteriori*,
 “ that God is a *necessary* and *self-existent* Being,
 “ we may be able to prove *a priori* from this *At-*
 “ *tribute* [of *Necessary-existence*] that there can-
 “ not be *Another* necessary and self-existent Being
 “ besides That one ; from whence it follows, that
 “ That Being is *God*.

concludendum hoc modo, esse *deum*, sub ratione *dei*, supponitur
 esse probatum, dari ens quoddam per se *necessarium*, nimirum ex
effectibus ejus, & ex negatione processus in infinitum. Atque ita
 quod primum de hoc ente probatur est *esse* ; deinde esse ab intrin-
 seco *necessarium* ; hinc esse *unicum* in tali ratione ac modo
 essendi ; ideoque esse *deum*. Atque in hunc modum prius ali-
 quo modo definitur questio *An est*, quam *Quid est*. *Suarez.*
ibid. p. 28.

“ You

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“ You will object, that This is proving the *Existence* of God from the *Essence* of God before known (For it is supposed that the *Essence* of God is that He is a *necessary* and *self-existent* Being) which is plainly repugnant ; since the Question *What He is* presupposes the other Question *Whether He exists* ; as St. Thomas [*Aquinas*] has justly observed on this Head. *Part I. Q. 2. Art. 2.*

“ I answer, that strictly and properly speaking, we infer not the Existence of God from his *Essence*, considered as such (which the Objection justly excepts to) but from one certain *Attribute* (which tho’ really identified with the *Essence*, is yet conceived abstractedly by us as a *Mode* of the Being *uncaused*) we deduce *another Attribute* ; and so we at length prove that That Being is *God*. Wherefore in order to prove in this way that *there is a God*, precisely considered as *God*, we suppose it proved before-hand, that there is a certain Being *necessary* in Himself ; proved namely from his *Effects*, and from the *Absurdity* of an *infinite* Progression. So, the first Thing we prove of This Being is, that *He exists* ; the next, that He is *Necessarily-existing* ; then, that He is the *only One* existing in such a way ; and so of consequence he is *God*. And thus, after some sort, we do first determine *Whether He exists*, and next the other Question, *What He is.*”

Thus far the acute and learned *Suarez* ; of whom I have many things to observe, before I go on to other Writers ; 1. That he appears to have been *ambitious* to make out something that should be called an Argument *a priori*, and was probably able to do as much in it as any one before or after him can justly be presumed to be. 2. That the *Method* which he took for it, proving first
some-



something *a posteriori*, and then proceeding to argue *a priori* for the rest, is very like to That which others have taken since. 3. That he differs however from those later Advocates for the Argument *a priori* in the main Thing of all, and determines expressly against their Notion, that *Necessity* can be conceived *antecedent* to Existence. He look'd upon That as flat *Abjurdity*, and *Self-Contradiction*, utterly repugnant to the Nature of a *First Cause*; and so he made no use of *antecedent Necessity*, or *internal Cause*, or *formal Reason*, *Ground*, or *Foundation*, in proving his Point: He was too knowing a *Logician* and *Metaphysician*, to offer any thing of that kind. 4. All that he admits is, that after the *Existence* and one or more *Attributes* have been proved *a posteriori*, we may then proceed to argue *a priori* for the rest: Not from *antecedent Necessity*, not from any thing conceived as *prior*, in order of Nature, to the *Existence* itself; but from the *Existence* and one *Attribute* or more considered as before proved, and as *prior* in Conception to all the rest. 5. One thing *Suarez* was very *singular* in, and upon That the whole stress of his Cause lies, so far as concerns the making out an Argument *a priori* for the *Existence* of *God*: He would have it *supposed* that *God* is not proved to be *God*, 'till the *Unity* is proved; and so he suspends, as it were, the Proof of a *Deity* upon the Proof of the *Unity*. This was an ingenious Thought, but too weak to bear. For in that way there could be no room for the Question whether *God* be *One*, since the very *Name* would imply it: Besides, it is universally allow'd, that the Proof of the *Existence* of a *Deity* is both clearer and stronger than any Proof of the *Unity*, and is sufficiently determined and settled in the first Place, before the consideration of the *Unity* comes in at all. When we have proved, for instance, that there is an *intelli-*

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gent, eternal, self-existent Being, (one or more) which is most easily proved from our own *Existence* ; we have then competently proved that *there is a God*, tho' we have not yet proved, or considered every *Attribute* that belongs to him. Such has been the way of *Divines* and *Metaphysicians*, first to prove the Existence of a *Deity*, under that confuse general Conception ; and next to proceed to the Proof of the *Unity* and other *Attributes* in due Place and Order : And it is not reasonable to suggest, that if a Man should fail in the Proof of the *Unity*, or of some other divine *Attribute* (for the Reason is the same in all) that he has therefore failed in his Proof of a *Deity*. That would be going against Rule, and risking the whole for a Part ; and, in short, resting the Proof of a *Deity* (the plainest thing in World) upon very obscure Conditions, very unequal Terms. But we shall have more of this Matter in the Sequel, as we take in other later Writers, who have directly or indirectly passed their Censures upon *Suarez* for his excesses on this Head. 6. Upon the whole, one may observe, that this pretended Proof of a *Deity*, as drawn *à priori*, is rather a Fetch, or a Subtlety of that great Man, than any thing solid ; a *nominal* Proof, rather than a *real* one ; or an affected manner of miscalling things by wrong Names.

A. D. 1610. CHRISTOPH. GILLIUS.

CONTEMPORARY with *Suarez* lived *Christopher Gillius*, a *Spanish* Divine and Jesuit, one of a subtle Wit and penetrating Genius. He has a pretty large Chapter^s, spent entirely upon our

& *Gillii* Commentationes Theologicæ de essentia & unitate dei. L. I. Tract. 8, c. iv. p. 391—396.



present Question. He takes notice, that there were not wanting some of that Time who contended that the *Existence* of a Deity might be proved *a priori*ⁱ. He had *Suarez* in his eye, as is plain enough (tho' he does not name him) because, a little after, he quotes the very Words which *Suarez* had made use of in that Argument. He mentions also *Scotus*, and some of his Followers, as aiming at the like Conclusion in a more far-fetch'd and round-about Way^k; allowing, that if God should extraordinarily or supernaturally *infuse* some higher degrees of Knowledge, then some kind of Proof *a priori* (however fruitless, and superseded by such *Illumination*) might be made from it. See how solicitous and industrious some have been in searching for every Appearance of a Proof *a priori*, as much as others have been in searching for the *Philosopher's Stone*, or for the *Squaring* of the *Circle*, or the like, and with the like Success.

OUR judicious Author first observes, that all Pretences of any formal Demonstration of that

ⁱ Non desunt recentiores, qui affirmant esse demonstrabilem *a priore*, etiam respectu viatorum, si non per se primo, saltem posita cognitione dei acquisita per discursum: Quoniam, inquit, postquam ex creaturis convincitur deum esse *ens necessarium*, & *a se*, & *unum*, necessario concluditur *a priore* hunc esse deum—&c. Ibid. p. 391.

^k Alio modo eandem conclusionem tuetur *Sectus* in I. Dist. 2. Q. 2. Cum *Scotistis* interpretibus ibidem: *Ochamus* in I. Dist. iii. Q. 4. Lit. F. *Gabriel*. Q. 4. Conclus. 3. *Rubionius*, Dist. ii. Q. 1. Art. 2. Conclus. 4. Nam quamvis existiment de lege ordinaria non haberi a nobis demonstrationem *propter quid*, hujus propositionis *deus est*; consent tamen fieri posse ut demonstraretur, si deus *infunderet* alicui notitiam evidentem eorundem terminorum, vel saltem termini *dei*, &c. p. 391.

Ch. I. kind had been utterly exploded¹ by the judicious; particularly by *Albertus Magnus*, and *Henricus de Gandavo*, and *Richardus de Media Villa*, and *Scotus*, and *Lyra*, and *Gasp. Casalini*, and many others referred to elsewhere^m: So that it might be justly look'd upon as a ruled Point, that no proper Demonstration *a priori* could be made of the Divine Existence; all such Attempts at length resolving either into some *Petitio principii*, or some *Equivocation* of Terms, or other the like Fallacy, or foreign Subtlety.

HE proceeds to examine the Question with the utmost Strictness and Nicety, traversing it through all its Mazes, and unravelling every Ambiguity and subtle Intricacy, whereby some had endeavour'd to support what they would call a Demonstration *a priori* in that Case; and shewing that none of them sufficiently answer'd the Purpose, or came up to the Pointⁿ. From whence we may
remark,

¹ *Propositio, deus est, sub neutra acceptatione ex prædictis, est victoribus de lege formaliter demonstrabilis a priore. Hæc est Alberti in Summa, Tract. iii. Q. 17. Henrici in Summa, Art. xxii. Q. 4. Richardi, in I. Dist. iii. Art. i. Q. 1. Scoti, in I. Dist. ii. Q. 2. & quodlibeto 7. Lyrani in Sapient. xiii. Gaspa Casalini, L. i. de Quadripart. justit. C. xvi. Conclus. 2. Et est de mente doctorum quos referam Cap. seq. Num. 7. Qui omnes non agnoscunt demonstrationem dei nisi ex creaturis.*—Notitia vero sumpta ex creaturis non potest esse *a priore*, ut patet. *Gillius*, ibid. p. 392. cont. p. 394.

^m *Gillius*, c. v. p. 400.

ⁿ Ex his constat firmum non esse fundamentum sententiæ assentis demonstrari deum esse *a priore* per rationem *necessitatis*, quoniam non est radix attributorum habentium ordinem ad creaturas: sit quamvis esset, cum ipsa non cognoscatur a nobis *a priore*, vel ex terminis evidenter conjuncta cum deo sub ratione illa attributalis fieri nequit ut eadem demonstratio sit formalis *a priore*.—primum initium illius demonstrationis sumitur ex cognitione *creaturarum*,—resolvitur in principia cognita ex *posteriore*, & ideo demon-

remark, that *Suarez's* Attempts that way were not approved by the most judicious Divines of his own Time, but were condemned by the Generality, and even by those of his own Order (for *Gillius* was a *Jesuit*) and that soon after: For, as his *Metaphysics* had first appeared in 1600, so this Censure of *Gillius* was finished and licensed in 1606, tho' not published before 1610.

A. D. 1615. ESTIUS.

AT the same time with *Gillius* liv'd the learned *Estius*, who deliver'd his Sentiments of the present Question in the manner here following. " " As " there are, among *Logicians*, two kinds of *Demonstration*, one demonstrating the Effect from " the *Causes*, and the other, the Cause from the " *Effects*; it is manifest that the *Existence* of a " *Deity* cannot be proved in the former way of

demonstratio non constat formaliter ex primis.—Quodnam peto est *ens*, de quo primum probatur esse? Ipsene est *deus*, an vero *ens necessarium*? Si *deus*, totus discursus sequens erit superfluous, quoniam procedit ad probandum id quod supponitur probatum: si *ens necessarium*, aut sumitur secundum absolutam & omnimodam necessitatem, & tunc hoc ipso supponitur esse necessarium ab intrinseco; aut, &c.—Ita patet ex illo principio, *ens necessarium est*, nullo modo demonstrari posse a priori hanc propos. *deus est*. *Gillius*, p. 396.

" Cum duplex sit apud dialecticos demonstratio, alia quæ ex *causis* effectum, alia quæ contra ex *effectis* causam monstrat; manifestum est, priori demonstrationis modo non posse doceri deum esse, cum nec *dei* nec ejus *existentiæ* possit in ullo genere causa proferri. Potest autem demonstrari posteriori modo, quemadmodum recte *S. Thom.* I. Q. 2. Art. 2, & 3. Et in universum Scholastici circa hanc distinctionem tradunt. *Estius* in Lib. Sentent. Comm. Tom. 1. p. 4.

So Cardinal Lugo also, a little later in the same Age. Dico tertio, *deum esse*, non est demonstrabile a priori. Sic cum Sancto *Thoma*, cæteri fere doctores, & latissime *Gillius*. Lug. Lib. I. Disp. xiv. c. 2. S. 8.

" Demon-

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“ Demonſtration, ſince no *Cauſe* in any kind can
 “ be aſſign’d either of *God*, or of his *exiſting*. But
 “ it may be demonſtrated in the latter way, as
 “ *St. Thomas [Aquinas]* rightly judges (*I. Q. 2.*
 “ *Art. 2, 3.*) and as the School-men upon this *Di-*
 “ *ſtinction* do univerſally teach.”

A. D. 1627. JOHANNES PUTEANUS.

THIS Writer expreſſes his Judgment in the
 Terms here following. °

“ THO’ the Exiſtence of a Deity cannot be
 “ demonſtrated *a priori*, yet it muſt be allowed,
 “ that as to ſome of the divine *Attributes*, They
 “ may be demonſtrated *a priori*.

“ 1. AS to the firſt Particular, it is plain from
 “ hence ; that every Proof *a priori* proceeds by
 “ *Cauſes* either *real* or *virtual*, or, which comes to
 “ the ſame, by *ſome prior Reaſon* ; but of the di-
 “ vine Exiſtence there are no *Cauſes* real or virtual,

° Licet *exiſtentia* deitatis nequeat demonſtrari *a priori*, concedendum tamen eſt de *quibusdam attributis* divinis, quod poſſint demonſtrari *a priori*.

1. Prima pars concluſionis ex eo innotefcit, quod demonſtratio quælibet *a priori* conſurgat ex *cauſis* vel *veris*, vel certe *virtualibus*, aut, quod idem eſt, ex *ratione aliqua priori*. Exiſtentia autem divinx *nulla ſunt cauſæ*, nec *veræ*, nec *virtuales*, nec *ratio prior* : Hæc enim includitur in conceptu formali *æſſentia* divinx, & quidem ita, ut impoſſibile ſit concipere *æſſentiam* divinam quin concipiatur *exiſtens*. Eſt enim æſſentia divina ens *ſimpliciter neceſſarium* ; repugnat autem enti ſimpliciter neceſſario, non habere *exiſtentiam* : deſinitur enim hoc communiter, *id quod ita eſt ut non eſſe nequeat*.

2. Poſterior vero pars conſtat ex eo, quod *æternitas* demonſtretur per *immutabilitatem*, hoc modo : Omne *inmutabile eſt æternum* ; Deus eſt *immutabilis* : ergo, Deus eſt *æternus*. *Ubiquitas* etiam divina demonſtratur communiter per *immensitatem* ; & ſic in aliis multis. *Joan. Putean. Opp. Tom. I. Part. 1. Q. iii. p. 24.*

“ not



“nor any *prior Reason* : For *Existence* is included
 “in the formal conception of the *divine Essence*,
 “inasmuch that it is impossible to conceive the di-
 “vine *Essence* but as *existing*. The *divine Essence*
 “is *Being* simply *necessary* : Now it is contradicto-
 “ry to the Notion of *Being* simply *necessary*, not
 “to have *Existence* ; for it is usually defined as
 “*That which so exists that it cannot but exist*.

“2. As to the second Particular, it is manifest
 “from hence, that *Eternity* is demonstrated from
 “*Immutability* in this manner : *Every thing im-*
 “*mutable is eternal* : *God is immutable* : *There-*
 “*fore God is eternal*. In like manner, the *divine*
 “*Ubiquity* is commonly proved from the *Immensify*.
 “And so in many other Cases.”

THE Author here well distinguishes between
 arguing *a priori* from *Existence* and *Attributes* al-
 ready proved, to other *Attributes*, and arguing *a*
priori from *Attributes*, or from any Thing else, to
 the *Existence* itself. The one he allows as just and
 rational, the other he rejects as manifestly absurd:
 And so far he is certainly right. Some indeed may
 scruple to call it arguing *a priori*, when a Man
 argues from *Attribute* to *Attribute* ; conceiving that
 it should rather be styled arguing *ex absurdo*, and
 that nothing short of a *real* (as opposed to *notio-*
nal) priority, is sufficient to denominate or consti-
 tute an Argument *a priori*. But that I take to be
 a fruitless Nicety, and such is not worth the insist-
 ing upon ; for at last it will terminate in a Dispute
 about *Words*. It is sufficient, that there is nothing
prior to the *Existence*, no not so much as in Order
 of Nature, or Notion, or Conception ; and so all
 arguing *a priori*, as to that Case, is for ever exclud-
 ed. But as to the other Case, the Manner of ar-
 guing is undoubtedly right, whatever Name we
 give to it : And there seems to be no just Objec-
 tion against calling it *a priori*, so long as the *Exist-*
ence

Ch. I.  ence is look'd upon as always *first* in Conception, and that the most *natural* Order of Conception be followed in arguing from *Attribute* to *Attribute*, and the Process be not made too *arbitrary* ^p.

A. D. 1642. RODERICUS DE ARRIAGA.

THIS acute Metaphysician and Divine delivers his Sentiments as follows: "The *Being* or *Existence* of God cannot be demonstrated *a priori*. " So St. *Thomas*, *Albertus*, *Durandus*; and of our " Order (of Jesuits) *Valentia*, *Molina*, *Suarez*, " and *Vasquez*, whom *Tanner* mentions and follows." ^a After this, he enters minutely into the Merits of the Question, assigning his Reasons why the *Existence* cannot be proved *a priori*: which being much the same with those before-mention'd, I chuse, for Brevity sake, to omit them, and proceed. Only, I may observe, that here are three Authors, *Durandus*, *Molina*, and *Tanner*,

^p *Richardus de Media Villa*, in a Chapter before referred to, observes well to this Purpose, That the Order of the Attributes ought not to be settled in an *arbitrary* manner, but as *Reason* requires.

Nec loquor hic *de ordine* qui tantum est ex parte *voluntatis* (quia tali ordine posset, in nostra ratione intelligendi, quandoque unum esse *prius*, quandoque *posterius*, sicut *placeret nobis*) sed loquor de ordine qui est in conceptionibus nostri intellectus intelligentis divina *attributa* secundum illum ordinem secundum quem *magis sunt apta nata* intelligi: & sic intelligendo divinas perfectiones, est talis *ordo* ex parte nostra. Prius enim, secundum rationem intelligendi, intelligimus *divinum esse*, quam aliquam ejus perfectionem; secundo, suum *intelligere*; tertio, suum *velle*. *Ricard. de Med. Vill. L. I. p. 32.*

^a Prima conclusio, deum esse, seu *existere*, non potest demonstrari *a priori*. Ita D. *Thomas*, *Albertus*, *Durandus*: & e nostris, *Valentia*, *Molina*, *Suarez*, & *Vasquez*, quos refert & sequitur *Tannerus* loco citato. *Roderic. de Arriag. Tom. I. p. 30.*

beyond

beyond what I have quoted upon the Question : And it is further observable, that he takes in *Suarez* amongst them, as one that had declared against the Argument *a priori* ; as indeed he *really* had, tho' *verbally* he might seem to differ, as I have before hinted. So *universal* hitherto had been the Agreement of *Metaphysicians* and *Divines* in this Article.

A. D. 1644. DIONYSIUS PETAVIUS.

THE very learned *Petavius* is but short upon this Question, mentioning it transiently as it came in his way : But he is too considerable a Person to be omitted in this recital. He takes notice, that the *Existence* of a *Deity* is not to be proved from any Thing *prior* or *antecedent*, but from *Effects* only, and *a posteriori* ; and from the *Absurdities* which lie against the contrary Persuasion. ^r

A. D. 1652. NATHANAEL CULVERWELL.

I SHALL now mention a *Protestant* Writer of our own, of some Note in his Time. He was Fellow of *Emanuel College* in *Cambridge*. In his Book entituled, *An elegant and learned Discourse of the Light of Nature*, he occasionally drops a few Words to our purpose : " There can be no

^r Verum hæc iisque similia tum nos commoverent, si probationum id genus ageretur quod ex *antecedentibus* & *prioribus* ducitur, ac *demonstrationem* & *scientiam* parit : Ejusmodi enim locum in deo non habent.—Nihilominus ex *effectis* & iis quæ *posteriora* sunt, atque etiam iis ex *incommodis* & *absurdis* quæ in *contradictentium* altera parte cernuntur, argumenta licet colligere, quibus deus esse monstretur, *Petav. Dogm. Theolog. T. I. L. 1. c. 1. p. 23. 32.*

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“ Demonstration of him [God] *a priore* ; for he
 “ is the *first Cause* : And all Demonstrations fetch’d
 “ from such *Effects* as flow from him, they do
 “ only shew you that he is ; they do not open and
 “ display the Divine Essence,” &c.¹

A. D. 1658. Bp. BARLOW.

A MORE considerable Writer of our own, so far as concerns the present Question, was *Thomas Barlow*, then Fellow of *Queen’s-College, Oxon.* and afterwards (A. D. 1675.) Bishop of *Lincoln*. He published some *metaphysical Exercises*, wherein he discovers great Learning, and no less Acuteness. The Edition of 1658, which I follow, is the Second Edition. I shall produce his Sentiments at large, because he enter’d deep into the Question, view’d it on every side, and withal pass’d his Censure (tho’ rather too severe) upon the learned *Suarez*.

He writes thus : “ Our Knowledge of God,
 “ arising from the Light of Nature, is not *a priori*,
 “ and *etern*. The Reason is, because then God
 “ could not be *eternal*, if there were any Principle
 “ prior to God : For *Eternity*, in the very Notion
 “ of it, excludes any *prior* Principle. Consequent-
 “ ly, if God be eternal, there cannot be any *prior*
 “ Principle whereby he may be known *a priori*.
 “ ----- Were there any Principle by which God
 “ might be known *a priori*, then, 1. God would
 “ not be the *first* Original and *first Cause*, as
 “ having by the Supposition another *Cause* prior
 “ to him. ----- 2. That supposed *antecedent* Prin-
 “ ciple, by which the Existence of God should be
 “ proved, must be either *external* (of the *final* or
 “ *efficient* Kind) or else *internal*, of the *material*

¹ Culverwell, p. 212.

“ or *formal* kind. Now it cannot be of the *final*
 “ kind, because God is the *chief End*, and there
 “ cannot be any *higher final Cause*; whereby to
 “ demonstrate *a priori* the Existence of God. It
 “ cannot be of the *efficient* kind; because if God
 “ had any antecedent *efficient Cause*, then God
 “ would be an *Effect*, &c. ----- Neither can it
 “ be said, that such prior Cause is either *mate-*
 “ *rial* or *formal*: For the perfect *Simplicity* of the
 “ Divine Nature admits not of any such *Causes*, as
 “ is self-evident: Consequently there is no room
 “ for any *Cause* whereby to demonstrate *a priori*
 “ the Existence of a Deity.”^t

Our learned Author here enters into the Heart
 of the Question, and reasons his Way through, like
 a knowing and judicious Man. Only he seems ra-
 ther too short as to what concerns the two internal
Causes, called *Material* and *Formal*: But that Bre-
 vity of his may be competently supplied from what
 has been said above, under *Duns Scotus*. I pro-
 ceed to observe how he animadverts upon *Suarez*.

^t Hæc nostra de deo cognitio, a lumine naturali orta, non est
a priori & dī ōn. Ratio est, quia sic deus non esset *æternus*; modo
 esset aliquod principium deo *prius*: Ipsa enim *æternitas* intrinseca
 dicit negationem principii; & per consequens, si deus sit *æternus*,
 non potest esse aliquod principium *prius*, per quod *a priori* cognosce-
 retur. — Si esset aliquod principium quo deum *a priori* cognosce-
 remus; tum, 1. Deus non esset principium *primum* & *causa prima*,
 utpote qua alia causa esset *prior*. — 2. Principium *prius* ex quo pro-
 bari possit *a priori* deum esse, vel erit *externum* (*finale* vel *efficient*)
 vel *internum*, scil. *materiale* vel *formale*. Non *primum*, quia
 cum deus sit *finis ultimus*, non possit esse causa *finalis prior*, per
 quam demonstrari possit dī ōn deum esse. Non *secundum*, quia
 si deus habuisset causam *efficientem* priorem, tum deus esset *effectus*,
 &c. — Nec dici possit, quod illa causa sit *materialis*, aut *formalis*,
 summa dei *simplicitas* tales causas non admittit, ut manifestum est:
 Et per consequens non est *causa ulla*, per quam *a priori* demon-
 strari possit esse deum. Barlow. Exercit. Metaph. IV. §. 28.

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“ I AM aware, that *Suarez* is of opinion, that
 “ we may, in some sort, demonstrate *a priori* the
 “ Existence of a Deity: Not by the *Essence* of
 “ God as such, but by some certain *Attribute*
 “ which is *really* the *Essence* of God, only confi-
 “ dered by us, in an abstract way, as a *Mode* of
 “ the uncaused Being. But, to say the Truth, I
 “ approve not this *bold* Assertion of the learned
 “ *Jesuit*. Because it is a manifest Contradiction
 “ to say, that the *Existence* of God can be proved
 “ *a priori* from any *Attribute* whatever, when every
 “ *Attribute*, *as such*, in the very notion of it de-
 “ notes something *posterior* to the *Essence* of which
 “ it is the *Attribute*. For if the *Attribute* be
 “ *really* distinct [from the *Essence*] then it is *really*
 “ subsequent to it: Or if it be only *notionally* di-
 “ stinct (which is the Case in the *divine* Being)
 “ then it is likewise *notionally* subsequent to the
 “ *Essence* whose *Attribute* its conceiv’d to be. It
 “ is not possible so much as to imagine any *Attri-*
 “ *bute* but what *pre-supposes* some *Essence* whose
 “ *Attribute* it is. Consequently our Knowledge
 “ of God’s Existence is *a posteriori* only: And of
 “ that kind are all the Demonstrations brought by
 “ *Metaphysicians* and *School-men*.”^v. The learned
 Author

^v Novi quod *Suarez* putat, nos posse aliquo modo *a priori* demon-
 strari deum esse: non per *quidditatem* dei, ut sic, sed ex
 quodam *attributo* quod *re ipsa* est *essentia* dei, a nobis autem ab-
 stractius consideratur ut *modus entis* non *causati*, &c. Sed ut quod
 res est dicam, non probo hoc docti *Jesuita* audax pronuntiatum.
 Quia manifeste implicat deum esse demonstrari posse *a priori* per
 attributum quodcunque, cum attributum omne, qua tale, intrin-
 seca dicit aliquid *essentia* illa *posterius* cuius est attributum.—Nam
 si sit attributum *re distinctum*, tum *re vera* est *posterius*; si sit at-
 tributum solum *ratione distinctum* (quod in *divinis* accedit) tum
 est etiam *ratione* *essentia* *posterius*, cuius attributum concipitur:
 cum attributum nec fingi posset quin *presupponitur* *essentia* aliqua
 cuius

Author here argues the Point against *Suarez* with great Strength and Acuteness: Only he seems to fix an Opinion upon *Suarez* which never was his: For *Suarez* himself plainly disowned any such arguing *a priori* for the Existence, in that crude and gross Sense which *Barlow* appears to take it in, while he is disputing against it. All that *Suarez* really meant, as I have before-hinted, was, that the *Unity* might be proved *a priori*, after having proved the Existence *a posteriori*: And such Proof of the *Unity* he improperly called, or erroneously conceived to be, proving the Existence of *God a priori*, inasmuch as God should not be deem'd to be *God*, till proved to be *one*. Our Author afterwards very well confutes that peculiar Fancy, which *Suarez* and some few others had countenanced in that Article: I say, our Author well confutes that Notion, by observing, that the *Existence* of a *Deity* is sufficiently proved, as soon as an *infinite, eternal, uncreated, independent* (he should have added *intelligent*) *Being* is proved; and that the Question of the *Unity* comes not properly in till afterwards *. *Valentia* had effectually obviated

cujus est attributum. Et per consequens *deum esse* non nisi *a posteriori* cognoscimus: Tales enim sunt demonstrationes omnes a metaphysicis & scholasticis adducta ad ostendendum deum esse; ut videre est apud *Fran. Suarez*. Metaph. p. 2. Disp. 29. Sect. 2. Num. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *Aquin.* contra Gent. L. I. c. 13. p. 11. & *Ferrarienf.* ibid. *Nazarium* in I. P. Q. 2. Art. 3. & apud *Aquin.* I. P. Q. 2. Art. 3. & commentatores. *Barlow.* ibid. p. 129, 130. conf. p. 165, 186.

* Hoc dato, quod non ostendunt deum esse *unum*, tamen & adhuc erunt argumenta prædicta satis valida, & in demonstrationem thesisi antedictæ valitura: Quia in præsentī hoc solum demonstrandum suscepimus, nempe esse aliquod ens quod *deum* dicimus, *infinitum, æternum, increatum, & independentens*. Sed an hoc ens *unum* sit aut *multiplex*, alterius est loci & quæsitū opus demonstrare. *Barlow.* Exercit. IV, p. 161.

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that Pretence of *Suarez*, some time before, in what he had said against *Cajetan*, who had been beforehand with *Suarez* in that Piece of Subtlety.^y

ONE Thing further I would observe of *Barlow*, before I dismiss him, that he was very scrupulous as to admitting that any of the divine *Attributes* might be demonstrated *a priori*. For; tho' he allowed the way of arguing from one Attribute before proved, to another not proved, and makes use of it himself more than once; yet considering that the *Attributes* are in reality (however notionally distinguished) identified with the *Essence*, he apprehended such Reasoning could not justly be accounted Reasoning *a priori*^z, since the divine

^y In proposito igitur, cum dei nomen audimus, communiter solemus concipere imperfecte & confuse, vel *primam causam*, vel *primum movens*, vel alia quæ rationes *Thomæ* concludunt. Quamobrem rationes ejusmodi, quæ scilicet probant esse aliquod *primum movens*, *efficiens*, &c. ethi non probant *quid*, & *quale* illud sit, scilicet *immateriale*, *infinum*, *unum* numero, &c. satis tamen probant *deum* esse. Illa enim aliâ probare, pertinet ad quæstionem de *natura* & *quidditate* divina, & probantur etiam noni admodum difficulter, constituta jam veritate *divinæ entitatis*, juxta quæstionem *an est*. Atque hinc fit quod D. *Thomas* non nisi post expeditam hanc quæstionem *an est*, disputat de *unitate*, *simplicitate*, *æternitate*, & aliis ejusmodi perfectionibus divinis, ut videmus in sequentibus quæstionibus. Quocirca cum *Cajetanus* hic negat, probari *per se* his rationibus D. *Thomæ*, *deum* esse, eo quod non probatur illis dei *unitas*, & *infinitas*; & concedit tantum, id probari *per accidens*, (ut scilicet ejusmodi rationes concludunt esse quædam prædicata quæ ei rei veritate soli deo conveniunt) non satis distinxisse videtur inter quæstionem *an est*, & *quid est*. *Greg. de Valent.* Tom. I. p. 64.

^z Fateor *Suarezium* & *scholasticos* utilitate affirmare *æternitatem*. (ut & alia nonnulla attributa dei) demonstrari posse *a priori*, & admittere medium ratione prius; ita ut illud medium licet in re ipsa non sit æternitate prius, tamen quoad modum nostrum concipiendi, imperfectum possit esse prius. Sed, ut quod sentio libere proferam, minus has scholasticas non probo, & tutius esse judico, & deo dignius, si de deo & perfectionibus suis loquamur prout sunt, non prout ab intellectu nostro fingantur. Et sic rectius

divine Essence could not be conceived *prior* to itself. There is certainly Weight in the Suggestion. But the Point is not worth the contesting, as I have before intimated, since it will terminate only in a Dispute about *Words* or *Names*. That it is reasonable and right to argue from *Existence* and *Attributes* proved, to other Attributes not proved, is agreed on all hands: And whether such arguing shall be called reasoning *ab absurdo*, or *a priori*, is not very material. I have hinted above, under what Restrictions or Cautions I conceive it may be justly term'd reasoning *a priori*. But whatever way this By-point, of slight Consideration in the main, be determin'd, the other more material Question concerning the arguing *a priori* for the Existence (or for any of the Attributes from any Thing considered as *antecedent* to the *Existence*) is no way affected by it. For such kind of arguing will undoubtedly be still condemned as wrong, in every View, and in every Construction, and upon every the most favourable Supposition that can with any colour of Reason be made for it.

A. D. 1662. FRANCISCUS BONÆ SPEI.

THIS Author likewise declares his Judgment, that there can be no Demonstration *a priori* of the *Existence* of God, and further testifies, that it was then a settled Point amongst *all*, about which there was no Dispute. ^a

rectius dices aternitatem a priori demonstrari non posse, quia in re ipsa ita est prout affirmatur, quam aternitatem posse a priori demonstrari, cum in re ipsa non ita sit, nec esse possit medium ullum in re prius, ut supra demonstravimus. Barlow Exercit. V. p. 187.

^a Dico, Deum existere demonstrari non potest demonstratione a priori: Ita omnes communiter. Franc. Bon. Sp. Disp. I. Dub. 2.

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A. D. 1678. DR. CUDWORTH.

DR. CUDWORTH's Judgment in this Article cannot but be of great Weight, as he was a Person of eminent Learning and Abilities, a *Protestant* Writer, and therefore the less apt to take any thing implicitly from the *Popish* School-men; extremely desirous besides, to draw together every plausible Argument, that could with any shew of Reason be urged for the Existence of a Deity, and to make the utmost Improvement of them. Notwithstanding all which he frankly declares, in his *Preface* to his great Work, his Judgment against the Argument *a priori*, in these remarkable Words: "We do therein also *demonstrate* the absolute impossibility of all *Atheism*, and the actual Existence of a God: We say, demonstrate; not *a priori*, which is *impossible* and *contradictious*, but by necessary inference from Principles altogether undeniable." ^b

IN the *Book* itself he has a great deal more to the same purpose, Part of which has been cited above; and for the rest I am content to refer the Reader to the Pages where he will find it. ^c

A. D. 1683. LE BLANC.

LE BLANC is another *Protestant* Writer, of great Learning and Judgment, who freely declares his Sentiments against the possibility of demonstrating *a priori* the Existence of God. He does it nearly in the same Words ^d with *Estius* above-cited;

^b Cudworth's *Intellect. Syst. Preface*.

^c Cudworth, *Book I. ch. iv. p. 715, 716.*

^d Cum duplex sit demonstratio apud dialecticos, altera quæ ex causis effectum, altera vero quæ contra ex effectis causam monstrat,

cited ; tho' without taking notice from whom he borrowed them.

A.D. 1690. ABp. TILLOTSON.

THIS great and good Prelate seems to have thought, that neither the *Existence* nor the *Attributes* of God could be demonstrated *a priori*, falling in with the Sentiments of Bp. Barlow, mention'd above. He expresses himself in these Words, speaking of the divine *Spirituality* : " This is not " to be proved by way of *Demonstration* (for there " is nothing *before* God, or which can be a *Cause* " of him) but by way of *Conviction*, by shewing " the Absurdity of the contrary. " "

AGAIN, speaking of the divine *Immensify*, he says, " I have told you formerly, there being no- " thing *before* God, nor any *Cause* of his Being, " his Perfections cannot be proved by way of " *Demonstration*, but of *Conviction*, by shewing " the *Absurdity* of the contrary. " " He repeats the same Observation afterwards, applying it to the divine *Eternity*. " In a popular Discourse, he avoided the *Latin* and scholastick Phrase *a priori*. But it is very plain from his manner of expressing himself, that he meant the same as to say, there could be no *Demonstration a priori*, either of the *Existence* or *Attributes* of the Deity ; and that as to the *Attributes* in particular, the way of

strat, manifestum est, priori demonstrationis modo non posse doceri deum esse, cum nec dei nec ejus existentia possit in ullo genere causa proferri : Sed demonstrari potest posteriori modo, nimirum ex effectis. *Le Blanc. Theol. p. 91.*

* Tillotson's Sermon. 100. Vol. II. p. 671. fourth Edit.

† Tillotson. *ibid.* Sermon. 101. p. 678.

‡ *Ibid.* Sermon. 102. p. 683.

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reasoning by a *Reductio ad absurdum* was the best we could have, the utmost we could come up to. Indeed, the reducing the contrary Persuasion to a flat *Absurdity*, is a kind of *Demonstration*, and such as the *Mathematicians* themselves frequently make use of: But then it must be owned, that it is the *lowest* kind of *Demonstration*, (as not *directly* and *immediately* inferring the Thing to be prov'd ^h) and comes not up to the Perfection of the direct *offensive* Demonstration *a posteriori*, much less to the Demonstration *a priori*. It is a good and sufficient Proof, but not the highest kind of Proof; sufficient for *Conviction*, but not amounting to *Demonstration* emphatically so called: which is what our judicious Prelate had an eye to, in the Distinction which he thrice made use of.

A. D. 1712. Mr. HUMPHREY DITTON.

I SHALL close this *Historical Account* with a very good Writer, and close Reasoner, Mr. *Humphrey Ditton*, who appeared after the Time that the *new* Tenet of an Argument *a priori* had been offered to the World. He either knew not of it, or was not aware of its Force: For he determines as the whole Stream of *Metaphysicians* and *Divines* had before done, “That our Demonstrations of the *Existence* of a God, are all of them *an*, and *a posteriori*, as proceeding from the Effects.”ⁱ

Now, to sum up the Amount of this *Historical View*, it appears at length, that as to the Point of demonstrating *a priori* the Existence of a Deity, it

^h See *Ditton* on the Resurrection of Christ. p. 135.

ⁱ *Ibid.* p. 134.



is no *new Thought*, but very *antient*, and what has been turned and tried every way, and very maturely considered time after time, and as often rejected and thrown aside as contradictory and absurd ; by Men of the brightest Parts and coolest Judgment, and Men no way *prejudiced* against it, but sincerely disposed to accept it, and make use of it, if it had been capable of serving. It has been frequently and seriously consider'd by Persons of different Times and Tempers, Parties and Professions ; by *Antients* and *Moderns*, by *Philosophers* and *Divines*, by *Pagans* and *Christians*, by *Fathers* and *School-men*, by *Realists* and *Nominalists*, by *Thomists* and *Scotists*, by *Romanists* and *Reformed* ; and by all of them, as it were with one Voice, condemned and exploded. One shall scarce meet with so clear and so universal an Agreement for the Reception of any Article, as there appears to have been for the Non-reception of this, among Persons every way well qualified to judge of it, and fitly disposed for judging right, and having all the Light before them which any one can now have, or which ever could be necessary for determining the Point, to the entire Satisfaction of the *common Reason* of Mankind. Besides those whom I have mentioned (to which many more of like kind might be added) as *expressly* rejecting all Demonstration *a priori* in respect of the divine *Existence*, great numbers might be further mentioned, who *tacitly* disregarded it, and made no use of it in proving the *Existence* when occasion offered : And they also may be justly look'd upon, for the most part, as Witnesses against it, since they could not well be totally ignorant of it, nor unwilling to take it in and make the best of it, were it really of any force. For what man of Discernment would not prefer an *ostensive* Demonstration, where it can be had, before any other of

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IF now it should be ask'd, of what use or service this *Historical View* can be, in a Point of pure reasoning, and not depending at all upon *Authorities*; I answer, that it may be serviceable for several good Ends and Purposes.

1. AS it is not merely *Historical*, but in part *argumentative* also; as discovering the *Reasons* upon which wise Men before us have proceeded in forming their Judgment upon the Question in hand: And possibly those *Reasons* may meet with the more favourable Attention and Reception, on account of the hands they come from. For *Demonstration* it self must often be content to borrow all its *relative Force* from the Instrument of Conveyance.

2. IT is of use in all Questions which have before passed through many Hands, and have been often and carefully consider'd, to look back to what others have thought and determin'd upon them, For it may reasonably be presumed, in such Cases, that the Point has been carried to as great Perfection as it is capable of, since the Extent of *Human Reason*, in all Ages where the Light is equal, is very nearly the same. Besides, it seldom happens, that a single Person, who takes upon him to

go on *proprio Marte*, without consulting others, will be able at once to view the Argument on all sides, or to be aware of every Difficulty which may occur in it. *Plus vident oculi quam oculus*: In a multitude of counsellors there is Safety. I am aware that sometimes attending too much to others may forestal a Man's own better Judgment, or cramp a good Invention. But then, on the other hand, the following one's own Thoughts too much, disregarding what others have said or written, is often a means to make a Man self-conceited and superficial. The way therefore to avoid both Extremes, is to try first, how far we can go with our own unassisted Enquiries, upon any Question of pure abstract Reasoning; and afterwards to compare what we have done, with what others have done in the same kind before us.

3. To such as chuse to be led by *Authority* and *great Names*, in Points of an abstruse Nature (which they have neither inclination nor leisure to enquire closely into) it is of use to know on what side the *Authority* and the *great Names* really are, antient and modern. And it may reasonably be presumed, that *Truth* is with them; unless some fair Account can be given, how it came to pass that so many wise and great Men, so well prepared to make a true judgment, and so fitly dispos'd for it, should notwithstanding widely mistake in it.

HOWEVER, I mention not these things as if any *Authority* ought to prevail over clear and cogent Reason, or as if the Question now in hand wanted any *Authority* at all to decide or determine it. The same *Reasons* which obtained formerly, are of equal force now, and are never the worse for the wearing, as Time can never alter eternal Truths. I proceed therefore to examine this Question over again, (as if it had never been debated or considered before) and to see how it will now stand at the Bar of sober and impartial Reason.



C H A P. II.

*Considering the Merits of the Debate about
the Argument a priori.*

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HERE it will be proper to shew, but as briefly as may be, 1. That the supposed Argument *a priori* is very *loose* and *precarious*, having nothing in a manner to stand upon, except it be an ill use made of *equivocal* Terms, or Phrases. 2. That it is, moreover, when fully understood, palpably *wrong* and *absurd*. 3. That the several *Pleas* or *Excuses* invented for it, are fallacious, and of no real Weight.

1. I WOULD observe, that the supposed Argument *a priori* is at the best very *loose* and *precarious*, having nothing to stand upon, but an Abuse of *equivocal* Terms or Phrases. The whole seems to amount to little more than the ringing of Changes upon the Word *Necessity*; as shall be seen presently. But because that Word is capable of *many* Senses, and consequently apt to usher in *many* Fallacies; it will be proper here to note the *various* Acceptations of that *instrument* of Delusion.

Necessity is but of modern date (comparatively speaking) in our Language. It comes from the *Latin Necessitas*; which, tho' otherwise *antient* enough, yet seems to have been brought but late into our present Subject. ⁱ I know not what good the *Schools* did by introducing it, or by substituting

ⁱ See above, p. 6, 7, 8.



the improper and ambiguous Phrases of *necessary Existence*, or *Necessity of Existence*, instead of the more antient and more proper Expressions ; such as *natural Existence*, or *emphatical Existence* ; or such as *eternal*, *immutable*, *un-made*, *independent*, *permanent*, and the like. The *new Word Necessity*, as here applied, and as opposed to *precarious* or *contingent*, affords no *new Idea* beyond the other, but is apt to excite false Conceptions, and to promote false reasoning. But since the Mischief is already done, as to the *introducing* this improper Pagan Term into Christian Theology, and it is now too late to undo it ; the only way left to provide against the Misapprehensions arising from it, is to *distinguish*, as carefully as we can, the *several* Senses which have been commonly affix'd to the Words *Necessary* or *Necessity*. The most comprehensive Division of *Necessity* is into four Kinds ; *Logical*, *Moral*, *Physical*, and *Metaphysical*. Let us take those kinds singly in their order, and minutely examine what they mean.

(1.) *Logical Necessity* is, where it is an express Contradiction to say the contrary. ^k Which resolves into this, that the *same Idea*, under different Terms, or Expressions, is still the *same Idea*, and necessarily agrees with itself. Thus there is a *Necessity* that *Man* should be *rational*, as Rationality is implied in the general *Idea* of *Man*. Not that there is any *physical Necessity* that this or that *Man* should be so (for he may cease to be *rational*, or to exist at all) but there is a *logical Necessity*, that the *Definition* should agree to the Thing *defined*, and that the *Idea* expressed by the

^k *Necessarium logicum* est, cum ex terminis repugnat non esse. Sic *necessarium* est, hominem esse rationalem. *Chauvin.*

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Word *Man*, should be what it is, while suppos'd to be so. This kind of *Necessity* is otherwise called *Necessity of Predication*; importing an *ideal* and undeniable *Connexion* between *Subjeſt* and *Predicate*.¹ As if *Man* is ſaid to be *rational*, or to be an *Animal*. To the Head of *Logical Necessity* is to be referred what the Schools call *Necessitas Consequentis*, and likewise *Necessitas Consequentie*, expreſſing the indiſſoluble *Connexion* between *Premiſes* and *Conclusion*; ^m that is, again, between one *Idea* and another, or between *Propoſition* and *Propoſition*, or one part of a *Propoſition* and another part. In ſhort, *Logical Necessity* is nothing elſe but a Name for the ſuppoſed inviolable *Connexion* between *Idea* and *Idea*, or between *Propoſition* and *Propoſition*, or between *Subjeſt* and *Predicate*.

(2.) *Moral Necessity* imports a *Connexion*, but not ſo conſtant and invariable, between *End* and *Means*.ⁿ As when we ſay, 'There is a *Necessity* of Temperance to preſerve Health; or if it be ſaid, 'That *Man* is under a *moral Necessity* of doing his Duty, as it is a *Means* to Happineſs, his chief *End*. It is called *Moral*, in oppoſition to *Phyſical*, which comes next to be mention'd. If any *Man* is violently forced or compelled to any thing, he is then under a *phyſical Necessity*, and ſo far ceases to be a *moral Agent*.

(3.) *Phyſical Necessity* imports an inviolable *Connexion* between natural *Causes* and *Effects*.^o

¹ *Necceſſarium in predicando dicitur, quando datur neceſſitas enuntiationis, ſeu in enuntiatione. Pendet a connexione neceſſaria predicati cum ſubjecto; id eſt, ex inſolubili harum partium nexu, adeo ut prædicatum non poſſit negari de ſubjecto: ut cum dicitur, Homo eſt animal. Chauvin. p. 435.*

^m See Chauvin. *ibid*.

ⁿ *Necceſſarium morale eſt id ſine quo, quamvis absolute fieri poſſit effectus, nunquam tamen, vel raro fit. Chauvin. ibid.*

^o *Necceſſarium phyſicum eſt, quod ex cauſis naturalibus tale eſt: ut neceſſaria eſt eclipſis ſolaris ex interpoſitione lunæ. Chauv. ibid.*



This is often called *absolute* Necessity, in opposition to *moral*, which is not *absolute*, but *conditional*, or *hypothetical*, or liable to some Exceptions or Limitations. It is called *causal* Necessity, when intended to express what Influence the *Cause* will have in producing the Effect: As there is a *causal* Necessity for the appearing of Light when the Sun is risen. An *antecedent* Necessity, or a Necessity *a priori*, denotes the same thing. But a Necessity *a posteriori* is a Name intended to express what Reference the *Effect* has to some Cause or Causes: As if there are things *made*, there is a *Necessity* of a *Maker*. There cannot be *Motion* without a *Mover*; nor external *Light* without a luminous Substance.

(4.) THE fourth kind of Necessity is *metaphysical*, and imports *immutable* Existence proper to God only. It is opposed to *mutable*, *precarious*, *contingent*, *dependent* Existence. It is the same with what Dr. Cudworth somewhere calls a *necessary Schesis* to Existence, expressing the inseparable *Connexion* between the *Existence* and the *Subject* of it, between *Existence* and *Essence*. Creatures are considered as coming from *Non-existence*, and as being liable to lose the *Existence* which they enjoy; therefore their Existence is *precarious* and *perishable*. But the Deity never wanted *Existence*, never can cease to exist; therefore his Existence is *immutable*, *unperishable*, *firm*, *stable*, and *enduring* (independently) from everlasting to everlasting. This Permanency of Being is consider'd as a *Mode* of Existence, *pre-supposing* Existence, as *modal* Being always supposes *pure* Being.² It may be called
modal

¹ Necessarium metaphysicum est quod immutabiliter existit: ut Deus. Chaurin. ibid. p. 435.

² Necessarium dicitur illud quod non potest non esse, aut aliter se habere. Quocunque autem modo definatur, vel describatur,
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modal Necessity, as expressing that perfect *Manner* of Existence proper to the Deity : God's *Manner* of existing is above all Chance, Change or Failure. This *modal* Necessity, or Self-sufficiency, ought to be carefully distinguish'd from *causal* before-mentioned, *metaphysical* from *physical*. Causal Necessity is *antecedent*, *effective*, *operative* ; Modal is *posterior*, and *subsequent*, in order of Nature and Conception, to the *Existence* or existing Subject, whereof it is the *Mode*, and to which it is referred up as to its Source or Center, its *Substratum* or Support.

HAVING thus competently explained the several kinds of *Necessity*, I have one thing to observe of them, that the Idea of some sort of firm *Connexion* runs thro' them all; and that is the proper general Import of the Name *Necessity*. Connexion of *mental* or *verbal* Propositions, or of their respective *Parts*, makes up the Idea of *logical* Necessity. Connexion of *End* and *Means* makes up the Idea of *moral* Necessity. Connexion of *Causes* and *Effects* is *physical*. And Connexion of *Existence* and *Essence* is *metaphysical* Necessity. This last is what our present Argument is solely concerned in. It has been sometimes stiled *simple* or *absolute* Necessity, as opposed to *relative*. For

duo importat. Quia, quod non potest non esse dicit *esse* ; & præterea negat *desitionem* in esse. Quod vero dicit rem sese aliter habere non posse, Rem *presupponit* esse, eamque existere ait cum *modo* immutabilitatis. Adeo ut *necessarium* formaliter debeat explicari per remotionem *mutabilitatis*, idque ad oppositionem *conringentia*. Chauvin. p. 434.

Necessitas accipitur pro vehementia essendi illius quod per se & primo est *neceffe esse*, quod est Deus, & sic proprie definiri non potest. Describitur tamen & notificatur utcumque, & hoc melius per *affirmationem* quam *negationem* ; scilicet per *vehementiam* & *firmitatem* essendi, quam per *impossibilitatem* seu *non-possibilitatem* non essendi. Bradwardin. de causa dei. p. 678.

tho'



tho' *physical* Necessity may also be called *absolute*, as opposed to *limited* or *conditional* (as before hinted) it is not *absolute* as opposed to *relative*; because it stands in the *Relation* between Causes and Effects. But metaphysical Necessity has no *relation* to any thing extraneous to the Subject of it; it subsists only in the divine *Essence*, consider'd as inseparably connected with its own *Existence*. This is that pure, simple, absolute, transcendental *Necessity*, which the later *School-men* and *Metaphysicians* speak of.

THESE things premised, I may now proceed to enquire what the Argument *a priori* (as it is called) has to stand upon, or how it is supported. The way of coming at it is first to prove *a posteriori* the *Existence* of an *independent* Being, thus: *Something now is, therefore something has existed from all Eternity*; therefore some one *unchangeable* and *independent* Being, one at least; therefore, there is some one *self-existent* or *necessarily-existing* Being. Thus far is right and well, for the coming at *necessary Existence* in the way of arguing *a posteriori*. Call it *Necessity of Existence*, and then that *Necessity* imports a *Mode* of the Existence before proved, *subsequent*, in order of Nature and Conception, to the *Existence*, and referred up to the *Subject* of it. This *modal* Necessity is a *Property* of the independent Being, denoting his immutable Permanency, his infinite Stability. But it happens, that the Word *Necessity* often stands for *causal* and *physical* Necessity (very different from *modal* and *metaphysical*) and so here begins the first Double. The *subsequent* Necessity is soon after dropp'd, and *antecedent* Necessity is slipp'd upon us in its room. Under the cover of an ambiguous

* See Dr. Clarke's *Demonstration*, &c. Prop. 1, 2, 3.

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Name, the *Idea* which we began with is first changed for another, altogether new and foreign, and then enters the Argument *a priori* with all its Train. There is now conceived I know not what *antecedent* Necessity, and internal Cause, and prior Reason, Ground, and Foundation of the independent Being ; and all built upon nothing but the *Equivocation* of a Word, or a quick *Transition* made from *Necessity* considered in the *modal* and *proper* Sense, to *Necessity* taken in a *causal* and *foreign* Meaning. This *Necessity*, it is said, must be *antecedent*, in the *natural Order of our Ideas*, to our *Supposition of its Being*.^f Why must it be *antecedent* ? No Necessity had been proved before, but what was conceived *subsequent* (in the natural order of our Ideas) to the *Existence* of the independent Being, being a *Mode* of it, and referred up to it : Why then must it be *antecedent* ? There is no Reason at all for it ; unless it be that an Argument *a priori* required such an *Antecedency*, and would drop without it. The supposed *Antecedency* in this Case appears to be all Fancy and Fiction, not collected from what went before, by any regular Deduction, but *arbitrarily* fetch'd in, under the Umbrage and Protection of an *equivocal* Name. Put but *Immutability* of Existence, or *Independence*, or *Durability*, instead of *Necessity* of Existence (which really signifies no more than the other) and then it will be presently seen how the Notion of *Antecedency* drops and disappears : Which makes it plain, that the Notion is here false and foreign, not deducible from any regular Train of *Ideas*, but brought in, at all adventures, only because the technical Term *Necessity* admits of *two* Senses, and is a serviceable Word for the sinking one *Idea*, and bringing up *another*.

^f Clarke. *ibid.* p. 14. sixth Edit.



BUT to favour this new Notion of *Antecedency* (so arbitrarily introduced) it is added, "This Necessity must *antecedently* force itself upon us whether we will or no, even while we are endeavouring to suppose that no such Being exists. For example; when we are endeavouring to suppose, that there is *no Being* in the Universe that exists *necessarily*, we always find in our Minds (besides the foregoing Demonstration of something being *self-existent*, from the *Impossibility* of every thing's being *dependent*) we always find in our Minds, I say, some Ideas, as of *Infinity* and *Eternity*; which to remove, that is, to suppose no Being, no Substance in the Universe, to which these Attributes, or *Modes* of Existence, are necessarily inherent, is a Contradiction in the very Terms. For Modes and Attributes exist only by the Existence of the *Substance* to which they belong."

IN Answer to this Paragraph, I may observe briefly, 1. That there is no arguing from *ideal* to *real* Existence; unless it could first be shewn, that such *Ideas* must have their *objective Realities*, and cannot be accounted for, as they pass *within*, except it be by supposing such and such *real* Existence *ad extra* to answer them. 2. Allowing that we find such *Ideas* in our Minds, and that they *antecedently* force themselves upon us, this proves no more than a kind of order of *Antecedency* in our Conceptions, but does not prove any real *Antecedency* with respect to the divine *Existence*, as if that were preceded by something *prior* in order of Nature to it. 3. Whatever Necessity we may find ourselves under as to *conceiving*, or *imagining* thus or thus; yet we are under no antecedent Necessity of believ-

² Clarke, *ibid.* p. 15.

Ch. II.  ing that these *Conceptions* or *Imaginations* do infer the Existence of a Deity, 'till it be regularly proved to us, or 'till it can be clearly shewn what certain *Connexion* there is between *Ideas* and *Realities*, between *Thoughts* and *Things*. 4. If such certain *Connexion* could be proved, yet such Proof would not amount to a Demonstration *a priori*, being that the Process of such an Argument is altogether *a posteriori*, from *Effects* to *Causes*, from things *posterior* to something *antecedent*. For the Process runs thus: We have such and such *Ideas*, which *Ideas* must have *objective Realities* as their Cause or Ground; and those *objective Realities*, or *real Attributes*, must have their *Subject*, as all *Modes* and *Attributes* have: And thus at length by this *Analysis*, or in the way of *Ascent*, we come up to a *First Cause*, which is *antecedent*, in order of Nature, to every *Mode* and *Attribute* supposed to inhere in it, and to belong to it. So that, even in this way, we can never arrive to any thing which can be justly conceived *prior* or *antecedent*, in order of Nature, to the *Existence* of a First Cause. It appears then that *antecedent Necessity* is very *arbitrarily* introduced into this Subject, having no regular chain of Reasoning, no proper connexion of *Ideas*, nor indeed any thing, but an *Equivocation* upon the Word *Necessity*, to support or countenance it.

I WOULD next take notice, that the *Use* made afterwards of this *antecedent Necessity* is altogether as *arbitrary* and *fanciful* as the introducing it. The *Uses* it is made to serve are, to prove the *Eternity*,^v *Omnipresence*,^w and *Unity*^x of the self-

^v Demonstrat. p. 39.

^w Ibid. p. 41.

^x Ibid. p. 44.

existent Being. And here it is observable, that Necessity is furnished with *Epithets* (all in the arbitrary way) just as the Occasion requires ; *Epithets* suitable to the Points to be proved. When it is to prove the *Eternity*, then it is to be stiled *absolute*, not depending on any thing external, always unalterably the same.^y When it is to prove the *Infinity*, or the *Omnipresence*, then it is characterized as being again *absolute* in itself, and not depending on any outward Cause ; and now it must be every where, as well as always, unalterably the same ; having no relation to *Time*, or *Place*, or anything else.^z But when it is to serve for Proof of the *Unity*, then it is to be *simple*, and *uniform*, and *universal*, without any possible *Difference*, *Diformity*, or *Variety* whatsoever.^a That is to say, it shall be what the Demonstrator pleases to make it, that he may adapt it variously to the various Purposes he intended by it. The neater and shorter way would have been, to have denominated it an once an *absolute, omni-modous, all-perfect* Necessity ; and then not only *Eternity*, and *Omnipresence*, and *Unity*, but infinite *Wisdom*, *Power*, and *Goodness*, and every *Perfection* whatever might have been instantly inferred from it. For it might have been pleaded, that such *Necessity* had no relation to one Perfection more than to another, being *uniform* and *universal*, extending equally to all, and operating^b as much with respect to every Perfection, as to any, having nothing to limit it, nothing to controul it. This Reasoning appears equally clear and forcible with the other : And both are

^y Demonstrat. p. 39.

^z Ibid. p. 41.

^a Ibid. p. 44.

^b See Letters, p. 19, 34.

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alike weak and precarious, having no solid Foundation of Reason to rest upon; nothing but an obscure unintelligible Principle, floating in the Mind, and managed at pleasure, to make some *Appearance* of *Demonstration* in a way wherein none can be had, or to cover a *petitio principii*, which yet betrays itself immediately in every Instance.

I HAVE hitherto been observing, that the pretended *antecedent* Necessity is arbitrarily introduced, and then as arbitrarily *carried on*: And now I am only to remark farther, that it is, at length, as arbitrarily *dismissed*. For indeed there is as much reason for going on with it *in infinitum*, as for taking it in at all: And there is no more reason for stopping at *one* fresh antecedent Necessity, than for stopping at *five hundred*; nor any more reason for stopping there, than for going on *infinitely*. If every Thing that *exists*, and every *Circumstance* of it, must have a *Reason a priori* why it is, rather than *not* (a Supposition which the Argument *a priori* is built upon) then the *antecedent* Necessity itself must have a *Reason a priori* to fix and determine it, and that another, and so on infinitely. Wherefore if we admit but one *antecedent* Necessity as *prior*, in order of Nature, to the *First Cause*, there is no Reason at all for stopping at the first Remove, or for dismissing the Notion of an *antecedent* Necessity so soon, or at all. The same Thought, the same Suggestion will come over again at every new Advance higher in the Series of *antecedent* Necessities: For every one of them will want a *new* Ground, a *new internal Cause*, a *new antecedent Necessity*, to determine its Being; and all for the same Reason as the *First Cause* was supposed to want one. Therefore, I

° See Letters, p. 33.



say, it is perfectly *arbitrary* and *unaccountable*, to make a full pause at one single *antecedent* Necessity, and not to continue and carry on Necessities higher and higher, without number, and without end. Thus much may suffice for exposing the *precarious* and fanciful Nature of the pretended Proof *a priori*.

2. BUT I proceed farther to observe, that it is not only *precarious*, but manifestly *absurd*. It is demonstrable *a priori*, that there neither is nor can be any Proof *a priori* of the Existence of a *First Cause*, because there is no Cause prior to the *First*.^a But, to be a little more distinct and particular, imagine something prior or *antecedent*, in order of Nature or Conception, to the *First Cause*, what must that *something* be? There are but three possible Suppositions, and all of them flatly contradictory and absurd. Suppose either the *Substance* itself, or some *Property* of that Substance, or something *extrinsic* to both, to be that *antecedent* Ground; Reason, or Foundation, prior in Conception to the *First Cause*: They are every one of them incapable and incompetent for it.

(1.) To begin with the last of them, a *Principle extrinsic*. One would think by the turn of the Argument, in several Passages where it is handled, that the *antecedent* Necessity were considered as something *extrinsic* to the *First Cause*: Particularly where it is represented as *operating*^c

^a Hæc propositio *deus est*, non habet *medium terminum* quod *a priore* demonstraretur.—Non potest dari *medium desumptum a causa extrinseca*, nam *deus est*, a seipso, independens omnino ab alia re: non potest etiam sumi *medium a causa materiali intrinseca*; nam hoc non cadit in deum: Non a *formali*, nam in deitate non est ulla ratio formalis prior *ipso esse divino*, quæ nostro modo intelligendi sit ratio cur *deus sit*. Gillius, p. 386.

^c Letters, p. 19, 34.

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every where, and always, so as to make the divine Being *eternal* and *omnipresent*, or the like. And indeed if the Words carry any *Idea* at all in them, and any *force* of Argument, they must be so understood; just as we understand them of any external Cause producing its Effect. But, as an *extrinsic* Principle is *absurd* in itself, and is besides expressly rejected † by the Advocates for the Proof *a priori*, I need not here say a word more of it.

(2.) TAKE we then next the *Substance* itself, and consider whether that can be conceived as *prior* or *antecedent* to itself. It is very plain, that it cannot: And so much also is confessed on all hands ‡, and therefore we may dismiss this Article, and proceed.

(3.) THE only remaining Supposition is, that some *Attribute* or *Property* of the self-existent Being may be conceived *antecedent*, in order of Nature, to the same Being. But that is, if possible, still more *absurd* than the last preceding. An *Attribute* is *attributed* to its Subject as its Ground and Support; and a *Property*, in the very notion of it, is *proper* to the Substance whereunto it belongs, and *subsequent* in order of Nature and Conception to it. An *antecedent* Attribute, or Property, is as great a Solecism, and almost as flat a Contradiction, as an *antecedent Subsequency*, or a *subsequent Antecedency*, understood in the same sense, and same respect. Every Property, or Attribute, as such, *presupposes* its Subject, and cannot be understood otherwise. To make the Property *antecedent*, is inverting the natural Order, and confounding the Idea; and, in short, is denying it to be what it is. The Truth of what is

† Letters, p. 32.

‡ Letters, p. 33, 40. Demonstration, &c. p. 21.



here said, is so glaring and forcible, that it sometimes extorts the Assent even of those who upon other occasions affect to gainsay it. It is confess'd, that "The scholastick way of proving the *Existence* of the self-existent Being from the absolute *Perfection* of his Nature, is ὑπερον πρότερον. For, [N. B.] all or any Perfections *presuppose* Existence; which is *Petitio principii*." ^h If therefore Properties, Modes, or Attributes in God be considered as *Perfections* (and it is certain they must) then by this account they must all or any of them *presuppose* Existence. Indeed it is immediately added, in the same Place, *That bare Necessity of Existence does not presuppose, but infer, Existence.* That is to say, if such Necessity be supposed to be a Principle *extrinseck*: But if it be a *Mode* or *Property*, it must *presuppose* the Existence of its Subject, as certainly and as evidently as it is a *Mode* or a *Property*. It might perhaps *a posteriori* infer the Existence of its Subject, as Effects may infer a Cause: But to *infer* in the other way *a priori*, is altogether as impossible as that a *Triangle* should be a *Square*; which is joining repugnant Ideas together.

IN another Place, it is observed by the same learned Author, "That the Idea of *Space* (as also of *Time* or *Duration*) is an Idea of a certain Quality or Relation, which not being itself a *Substance* [N. B.] necessarily *presupposes* a Substance without which it could not exist." ⁱ Now if the *Necessity* spoken of be a *Property* or *Mode*, and not a *Substance*, it must, for the very same Reason, necessarily *presuppose* a Substance without which it could not exist. So true it is, that a

^h Letters, p. 33.

ⁱ Letters, p. 25.

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THE Sum then is, that, to make out an Argument *a priori*, there must be a *Cause*, or however a *Priority* or *Antecedency*, brought in to argue upon, and to draw an *Inference* from, to the *Existence* of a Deity: And yet no sooner is the Idea of *Cause*, or *Priority*, or *Antecedency* (tho' in Conception only) introduced, but we immediately subvert the Idea of a *Property*, and of a *First Cause*. It is a vain thing to insist one while upon the *Antecedency*, for the sake of the pretended *Demonstration*, and then presently to drop it, by retreating to the Idea of a *Property*, for the sake of warding off insuperable Objections. Either there is no *Antecedency* in this case at all, to form the *Argument* upon; or, if there be, the *antecedent* Principle is no *Property*, but a Principle *extrinsic*. So then either the *Antecedency* must drop, and the *Argument a priori* drop with it: Or if the *Antecedency* be kept up, the Idea of a *Property* is destroy'd instantly, and we are yet to seek for a *First Cause*. Turn we the thing which way we will, the presumed Argument *a priori* is all over contradictory and absurd. It is not merely abstruse or unintelligible, but plainly and clearly repugnant to Reason, and to itself. It is tacking together disjointed and incompatible Ideas, which can never stand together, but must inevitably clash and destroy one another. However, as there is no *Cause* whatever so defenceless and destitute but that something or other may be pleaded for it, and a skilful Advocate may lay Colours upon any thing: So it is here. A very ingenious Defence has been drawn up for the Argument *a priori*, in which we have the Spirit and Quintessence of what the *Cause* can afford.

afford.^k A just Reply was made to it some time after,^l by a very good Hand, which might save me the Labour of saying any thing more to it : But perhaps it may be of service, to have the same things represented in different lights ; or if it be only abridging what has been said before more at large, even that perhaps may not be altogether without its use. I proceed then,

3. To examine the several *Pleas* or *Excuses* invented for the Support of the Argument *a priori*, in order to shew that they are none of them sufficient for the Purposes intended. I shall break the Discourse into so many distinct *Parts*, or *Pleas*, for the distinct and methodical Conception of the Subject.

P L E A I.

“ T H O U G H it is indeed most evident, that
 “ no *Thing*, no *Being* can be *prior* to that Being
 “ which is the *First Cause* and *Original* of all
 “ things ; yet there must be in Nature a *Ground*
 “ or *Reason*, a permanent Ground or Reason, of
 “ the *Existence* of the First Cause : Otherwise its
 “ Existence would be owing to, and depend upon
 “ mere Chance.”^m To which I answer,

(1.) I F by *Ground* or *Reason* be meant a *Cause*, the Idea of it is repugnant to the Notion of a *First Cause*, which must be absolutely *uncaused*, both with respect to itself, and to every thing else. But if by *Ground* or *Reason* be meant only a

^k Answer to the seventh Letter, p. 40, &c.

^l Dr. Gretton's Review of the Argument *a priori*. Printed for B. Lintot. A. D. 1726.

See also Concio ad Clerum, upon the same Subject, and by the same Author. Cantabrigiæ, 1732.

^m Answer to the seventh Letter, p. 40.

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Ground or Reason for *asserting* such Existence, That we may readily admit, as meaning only that there is a Reason *a posteriori* whereby we prove the Truth of the thing that so it is. Reason and Ground are softer Names in this Case than Cause is, and may sometimes serve to hide the Absurdity which appears at once upon the naming of a Cause prior to the *First*. It may, or rather must be allowed, that there is a Reason for every Existence, a Reason of one kind or other, either *a priori*, or else *a posteriori* : But it is nevertheless certain, that there is not a Reason *a priori* for every thing, because there must be a *First* in the ascending Line ; as also, on the other hand, there is not a Reason *a posteriori* for every thing, because there must be a *Last* in the order of Descent.ⁿ

(2.) 'T H O' the *uncaused* Being has neither Ground nor Cause to determine its Existence, yet it is not owing to, or dependent upon mere Chance, because it is not owing, or dependent at all, but intirely *underived* and *independent*. If the Force of the Objection lies in this, that unless the Existence be dependent on something, it cannot be firm and stable ; this amounts to saying, that a *First* Cause, or an *independent* Existence, is a contradictory Notion in itself. It is certain, that if the Existence be dependent on any thing, it is not

ⁿ Observa, multas veritates posse *a priori* & *a posteriori* simul demonstrari: Ut v. g. esse *Admirativum*, demonstratur *a priori* per rationale, *a posteriori* vero per risibile. Alias vero esse veritates quæ tantum vel *a priori*, vel *a posteriori* demonstrari possunt: Quia cum necessario sistendum sit in aliquo *primo conceptu*, ante quem non sit alius, inde fit, illum non posse demonstrari *a priori*, quia nullam habet causam sui: E contrario vero etiam sistendum sit in aliquo *ultimo*, post quem non sit alius, inde rursus sequitur, illum non posse demonstrari *a posteriori*, quia (ut supponimus) nihil habet *posterius* se. Rederic. de Arriag. Curs. Philos. p. 222.



the *firmer*, but may be the more *precarious* for being so. The highest possible *Stability* is to be absolutely *independent*, absolutely *uncaused*: This is the strongest Security against all possible *Chances* or *Failures*: And therefore it never can be allow'd, that assigning it a *Cause*, a *Ground*, or *Foundation*, is *fixing* the Existence; when the supposing it to have no *Cause*, no *Ground*, &c. nor to *need* any, is really the Top Perfection of Being, the very highest and best thing that we can either say or conceive of it.

(3.) BUT supposing that there might yet remain some *Difficulty* in our Scheme (as *Difficulties* there must be in conceiving *Eternity*, and in searching the *mysterious* Nature and Existence of the *unsearchable* Being) yet if the *Difficulty* be rather *shifted* than taken away, by the Expedient here proposed, or if *Absurdities* be brought in instead of *Difficulties*, how then are we at all relieved by it, or the better for it? That such is the Case here, is plain at first sight. For what if we go on to assign a *Cause*, a *Ground*, or a *Foundation* for the *First Cause*, it is but going one step farther, and there the same *Difficulty* occurs as before, besides several new ones. That *Cause*, that *Ground*, that *Foundation*, that *antecedent* Necessity (or whatever else we call it) will still want another *Cause*, another *Ground*, another *Foundation*, another *antecedent* Necessity, to fix and support it; or else, by the same reasoning, its Existence will be *owing to*, and *dependent upon*, *mere Chance*.^o If we still go higher up, to a second or a third Remove, or to as many more as we can think on, the same *Difficulty* will haunt us all the way in the wandering Progress, and we shall never find rest for the Sole

^o See Dr. Gretten's Review, p. 15.

Ch. II. of our Foot, 'till we return to the Place where we first stepp'd aside, till we come back to the *First Cause* of all things, and there terminate our Enquiries. They that attempt to move but one step higher, are sure to involve themselves in inextricable Mazes, and are doubly to blame : First, for inventing a Cause *prior* to the *First*, or a Reason *higher* than the *highest* ; and next, for making that newly-invented Support (according to their own Argument) owe its Existence to mere *Chance*. Let the discerning Readers therefore judge upon the whole, who it is that makes the divine Existence *contingent* and *precarious*, they or we.

P L E A II.

" THE Existence of the First Cause is *necessary*, necessary *absolutely* and in itself; and therefore *that Necessity* is *a priori*, and, in order of Nature, the *Ground* or *Reason* of its Existence. ^p "

To which I reply,

(1.) IT is allowed that the Existence of the first Cause is *necessary*, not *contingent* : And because that *Necessity* is only a *Mode* of the *presupposed* Existence, therefore it is not *a priori*, or, in order of Nature, an *antecedent* Ground or Reason, but it is *subsequent* and *posterior*, in order of Nature and Conception, to that whereof it is the *Mode* : For all *Modes*, as such, are *subsequent* to their *Subject*, which is the *Ground* and *Support* of them.

(2.) NECESSITY *absolute* (in the *metaphysical* Sense, as here used) is a Contradiction to the Notion of *antecedent* Ground, or *Cause*, having no *Relation* ^a to any thing of that kind. It im-

^p Answer to seventh Letter, p. 41.

^a See above, p. 49, 50.

ports an inviolable *Connexion* between the *Essence* and the *Existence* in a Being *uncaused* and *independent*. To make *Connexion* the *Ground* and *Reason* of the *Existence*, either means that the *Essence* is the *Ground* of *itself*, or means nothing, amounting only to so many Words of Amusement.

P L E A III.

“THAT which exists *necessarily* (or in the “ Idea of which *Existence* and *Necessity* are inseparably and necessarily *connected*) must either “ therefore be necessary because it *exists*, or else “ it must therefore exist, because its *Existence* is “ *necessary*.” ^r I answer,

(1.) It is improper to say, that *Existence* and *Necessity* are *connected*: For since *Necessity*, as here applied, imports nothing but *Connexion*, it amounts to saying, that *Existence* and *Connexion* are so *connected*; whereas, in Truth and Propriety, the *Existence* and the *Essence* are what are here supposed to be *connected*. But all the Confusion arises from want of distinguishing between *causal* and *modal*, between *physical* and *metaphysical* *Necessity*.

(2.) WE do not say, that the First Cause is therefore *necessary* because it *exists* (for then every thing *existing* would be necessary) but rather, because it exists in *such a manner*, exists *independently*. Not that *Independency* is properly the *Cause* of *necessary Existence*, or *vice versa*, (for both are but Names or Expressions for one and the same Property or Perfection) but all resolves into this, that God is *what* he is, and such as we prove him, *a posteriori*, to be. We can go no higher than to say, that his Nature is *such*, that he exists inde-

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pendently, immutably, necessarily, as opposed to Contingency. It is wrong to ask for a *Wherefore* in this Case: It is supposing no *First Cause* at all. The *Plea* sets out upon a false Principle, that a *Therefore* must be given in every Instance assignable, or a Reason *a priori* admitted. We have done with Reasons *a priori*, as soon as we are arrived to the Top of all Existence. For as in abstract necessary Truths, the highest pitch we can come up to, is, that the *same Idea is the same Idea*, or every Idea is *what it is*; so in our running up to the Top of *real* Existence (as opposed to *ideal*) the highest Pinnacle of all is, that the *same Being is the same Being*, or is *what it is*. Such then is the Nature or Perfection of the Deity, that he exists *independently*. To assign a *Cause* for that Existence, is to make it *less*; it is to suppose it *dependent* on something else: It is destroying with one Hand what we build with the other. We pretend not therefore to give a Reason *a priori* why God exists *necessarily* (for if such Reason could be given, it would sink the Idea of *necessary* instead of raising it) but we assign Reasons *a posteriori* why we believe and maintain it; which is giving the τὸ ὄν, not the τὸ δέον, and is all that can be or ought to be given in this Case, as is self-evident.

(3.) BUT suppose we should attempt to go higher up beyond the *First Cause*, to something conceived *prior* or *antecedent* to it, will not the same Difficulty recur in every Stage of the Progression? The same Dilemma is applicable to the next higher Cause, and to every other, *in infinitum*. For it may still be pleaded, that such *antecedent Ground* must either be necessary because it exists, or else must therefore exist because its Existence is *necessary*; and so the Mind is again set afloat, without Stay or Anchor, in an endless Pursuit after more and more *antecedent* absolute *Necessities*.

P L E A.

P L E A IV.



“THE *Eternity* of God can no otherwise be proved, than by considering *a priori* the Nature of a necessary or self-existent Cause.-----That the First Cause has existed *from Eternity*, and shall exist *to Eternity*, cannot be proved from the *temporary Phenomena*, but must be demonstrated from the intrinsic Nature of *necessary Existence*.”

I answer,

(1.) THE Question here is not, by what *other* ways the *Eternity* can be proved, but whether it can be proved in this. Be the other Proofs, which proceed *a posteriori*, ever so lame or insufficient, their *Defects* will be of no service for the healing the *Absurdities* of this: So the Plea is foreign, and wide of the purpose; unless the Design were to plead for the *Usefulness* of a Proof, which cannot be shewn to be a *Proof*.

(2.) THE Suggestion here offered is not *true*, especially as to God's existing *from Eternity*. The natural, regular, and indeed the common way has been to prove the *Eternity* before the *necessary Existence*; and that is the very way which the Author himself took, to come at *necessary Existence*:^c And no one has better answered this *Plea* than *himself* hath done in another Place.*

(3.) IF

^c Demonstration, Prop. II. p. 11.

* “Not to *Philosophers* only, but even to the *meanest Capacities*, are there obvious Arguments in *Reason*, to prove clearly the Necessity of this divine Perfection [*Eternity*] and to set it before them in a practical and useful Light. For, since it is in some degree a Perfection *to be*; and a greater degree of that Perfection *to continue in being*; it is evident, when we conceive of God the *most perfect Being*, we must conceive him to be *infinite* in this Perfection also, as well as in others.—

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(3.) IF any one were first to prove the *Existence* and an *Attribute* or two more, and then proceed to demonstrate the *Eternity* from the *Existence*, &c. before proved, such a Method of arguing *a priori* we should not except to, neither do we condemn it^v. All that we object to, is the imagining any *Ground*, *Cause*, or *Necessity*, (or whatever it be called) *antecedent*, in order of Nature, to the *Existence*. One *Attribute* may perhaps rationally be considered as *prior* in Conception to another, and *Existence* as prior to all: ^w Therefore the way of arguing *a priori* from *Existence* and *Attributes* before proved, to other *Attributes* not yet proved, we may allow of as a rational and just Procedure. We distinguish here between arguing *a*

“ Again: ’Tis evident even to the meanest Capacity, which
 “ considers things at all; that he who first gave being to all
 “ other things, could not possibly have any *Beginning* himself,
 “ and must therefore necessarily have existed *from all Eternity*:
 “ And that he who hath already existed *from all Eternity*, inde-
 “ pendently, and *of himself*, cannot possibly be liable to be de-
 “ prived of his *Being*, and must therefore necessarily exist for an
 “ Eternity to come.” *Clarke’s* posthumous Sermons, Vol. I. p. 80.

^v The Schoolmen have often taken that Method of proving the *Eternity*, understanding it to be arguing *a priori*: And it seems that it may properly enough be so styled; tho’ some would scruple to give it that Name, because there is no *real Order* among the *Attributes*. (See Bp. *Barlow* on this Head, *Exercit.* IV. p. 183, &c.) But if there may be an order of *Conception*, it suffices: And that there may appears very plainly. See *Richard. de Media Vill.* who handles this Question at large, Lib. I. Distinct. ii. Quæst. 4. p. 32. And *Gillius*. Lib. II. Tr. 2. c. 9. p. 538.

* *Vera superiora sunt, quæ in solo deo consistunt; ut deus est potens, sapiens, atque bonus. Horum autem hæc quidem sunt quodammodo posteriora naturaliter, hæc priora. Posterius enim est deum velle, quam cognoscere; & cognoscere quam esse: Esse enim naturaliter hæc præcedit, & universaliter omnia talia attributa.* *Bradwardin.* in causa dei, L. I. c. 12. p. 201.

priori

priori to Attributes, and arguing in like manner to *Existence*. Ch. II.

(4.) IT is self-evident that nothing can be proved by a *repugnant* Notion of *antecedent* Necessity, conceived *prior* to the Existence: And therefore *Eternity* both *a parte ante*, and *a parte post*, must either be proved some other way, or not at all. That it may be proved in another way, and without the Help of *antecedent* Necessity (proved, I say, *a posteriori*, yea and perhaps *a priori* also) is abundantly manifest from the many excellent Treatises which have handled that Point at large; And St. Paul himself has testified the same thing; namely, that the *temporary Phenomena* are sufficient to make Men *clearly see* the *eternal* Power and Godhead of their Creator, and to render them *inexcusable* in their disbelief of it, or disregard to it.*

P L E A V.

“ IF the First Cause exists absolutely without
“ any *Ground* or *Reason* of Existence, it might as
“ possibly in Times past, *without any Reason*, have
“ not existed; and may as possibly in Times to
“ to come, *without any Reason*, cease to exist.
“ Can it be proved *a posteriori*, that the first Cause
“ of all Things will exist to-morrow? Or can it
“ be proved any otherwise than by shewing that
“ *Necessity* is a *certain* ground of *future*, as well
“ as of *present* Existence.” † I answer,

(1) BY asking, what must be the *certain* ground of that *Necessity*’s existing? Or how will it be proved that That *prior* Necessity will *exist to mor-*

* Rom. i. 20.

† Answer to seventh Letter, p. 42.

Ch. II. *row*, unless it be by assigning another Necessity, and so on infinitely? ² This kind of Reasoning, if it proves any thing, proves that there neither is, nor can be a *first Cause*: And so it is chusing to admit a manifest *Absurdity*, only to avoid an appearing *Difficulty*.

(2.) To answer more directly, it is not possible in the nature of Things to have any higher or stronger security as to the *First Cause*'s existing *to-morrow* than this; that he never had any *Cause*, *Ground*, or *Support* of his Existence, never *needed* any, being *independent*, and *self-sufficient*, ² the Prop and Stay, the *Ground* and *Foundation* of all Existences. If indeed He himself were to have any *Ground*, *Foundation*, or *Cause* of his Being, we might then have some handle for doubting whether his Relation to that Ground might continue, or how long it might subsist: But when he is above and beyond all *Grounds* and *Causes*, we have all the Reason in the World to believe, that he is infinitely secure from *Change*, is independently the same, *yesterday*, *to day*, and *for ever*. It is very odd to think of *ascertaining* his Existence by assigning him a *Prior Cause*, which is the only way to unsettle it, and to make it less certain than it is: But it is a great confirmation of the *Truth* of our Doctrine in this Particular, that every Argument form'd against it, is at length found to stand on its side, and to make for it.

² See Dr. Gretten's Review, p. 74.

² Nam, quod est *a se*, & non *ab alio*, non habet principium durationis. Cum enim in seipso habet sufficiens principium existendi, & existat per *essentiam*, concipi nequit non-existens antequam existat; atque adeo non habet principium durationis. Præterea, id quod non est *ab alio*, non habet in suo esse admistam *potentiam* ad *non-esse*; ac proinde non est vertibile in *non-esse*, atque adeo est æternum. Gillius, p. 1032.

P L E A VI.

“ W H E N Atheistical Writers affirm, that the
 “ Material Universe, and every existing Substance
 “ in particular, was eternal, absolutely *without* any
 “ Ground or Reason of Existence, can this Assertion
 “ on be confuted by him who shall himself affirm
 “ that God was eternal absolutely without any
 “ Ground or Reason of Existence ? ” ^b *Ans.* Yes,
 very easily, by shewing, that what those Men
 foolishly ascribe to the *Material Universe* (subject
 to innumerable Changes and Imperfections ^c) does
 and can belong only to some *unchangeable, inde-*
pendent Being, whose Existence we can demon-
 strate *a posteriori*. It is his Privilege, and his on-
 ly, to be above all *ground* or *antecedent* Reason
 of Existence, to be absolutely *uncaused*, being in-
 deed the *First Cause*. But those *Atheistical* Writ-
 ers, most certainly, never can be solidly confuted
 by one that shall assert a Cause *prior* to the *First* :
 Because it is, in effect, denying any *First Cause* at
 all, and maintaining an *endless* Progression ; which
 is what every *Atheist* would readily come into :
 Not to mention how easy it were for them to play
 with *antecedent* Necessity (an arbitrary Principle)
 adapting the same to their own Schemes. ^d

P L E A VII.

“ T H E *Infinity*, or *Immensity*, or *Omnipresence*
 “ of God can no otherwise be proved, than by

^b Answer to a seventh Letter, p. 43.

^c See *Wollaston*. p. 76.

^d See Dr. *Gretton*, p. 21, 22, 23, &c.

“ considering

Ch. II. " considering *a priori* the Nature of a *Necessary* or
 " *Self-existent* Cause. ——— That this Author of
 " Nature is himself absolutely *immense* or *infinite*
 " cannot be prov'd from the *finite* Phænomena, but
 " must be demonstrated from the intrinsic Nature
 " of a *Necessary-Existence*.^c " To which I re-
 join ;

(1.) FROM *antecedent* Necessity, or from any thing *prior* to a First Cause, (a Notion self-contradictory, and palpably absurd) nothing at all can be proved. So then whatever becomes of other Proofs for the *Immensify*, it is certain and manifest, that nothing can be done with This, which is no Proof at all.

(2.) AS to *Necessary-existence*, soberly and justly understood in the *modal* Sense, and as *subsequent* in order of Nature to its *Subject*, (amounting to the same with *independent, immutable, or infinitely durable Existence*) we have nothing to object against *arguing* from it, so far as it may carry us, or against calling it *arguing a priori*, as it is inferring one or more *Attributes* from *Existence* and some Attribute or Attributes before proved. This is quite another thing from the *Argument a priori* contended for, and ought to be carefully distinguish'd from it, we find no Fault with any one's *arguing* from Attribute to Attribute : But what we blame is, the *arguing* from a supposed *Ground, Foundation, or internal Cause* of *Existence*, to either *Existence, or Attribute*.

(3.) AS to *Immensify, or Omnipresence*, if the *finite Phænomena* are sufficient to prove that it extends to all *real Existence*, it suffices : No one, after that, will scruple to admit as large an *Infinity* as can be desired, tho' the Proof be not drawn

^c Answer to the seventh Letter, p. 43.

out in Mood and Figure. Mischief is often done by pretending to strict and rigorous *Demonstrations*, where we have no occasion for them, and where the Subject is too sublime to go far in, with clear and distinct Ideas. Such Attempts serve only to make that become matter of *Question*, which before was *unquestionable* while standing only on *reasonable* Presumption, or *moral* Proof.

P L E A VIII.

“ IF the First Cause exists, absolutely without any *Ground* or *Reason* of Existence, it may as possibly be *finite* as *infinite*; it may as possibly be *limited* as *immense*.”^f I answer,

THIS is Repetition of the same Argument a little diversified, and so has been sufficiently answer'd in the Articles preceding. But I may briefly observe, that the supposed *Ground* or *Reason* is so far from securing us that the *First Cause* shall not be *finite* or *limited*, that it seems to endanger it the more, by making it *dependent* upon a *Ground*, and subject to a *prior* Causality. Besides, what shall secure that *Ground* itself from being *finite* and *limited*? Must it be another *Ground*, and then another, and so on infinitely? Such Reasoning destroys itself.^g And how are we at all the wiser for being told, that the absolute Necessity must be *every where*, or that it must operate *every where* alike?^h If a *petitio principii* were allowable, it were better to say (and it is as easily said) that the *independent* First Cause must be *every where*,

^f Answer to the seventh Letter, p. 43.

^g See the *Plea* strongly retorted in Dr. Gretton's Review, p. 80.

^h Letters, p. 13. Demonstrat. p. 43.

Ch. II. and in *all Places* alike ; for this is Sense at least, if it does not amount to a *Proof* : While the other is as much a *petitio principii* (for who knows *how* or *where* such imaginary Cause must operate?) and besides is talking either without *Ideas*, or with *contradictory* Ideas, as has been often shewn. To be short, our *physical*, *moral*, or *scriptural* Proofs of the *Omnipresence* are *clear* enough, and *full* enough, to answer all Intents and Purposes, and to satisfy every reasonable Mind ;ⁱ as the Author allows elsewhere.^k

P L E A IX.

“ THE *Unity* of God (which, I think, has always been allowed to be a Principle of *natural* Religion : otherwise St. *Paul* could not justly have blamed the Heathen as *inexcusable* in that they did not retain God in their Knowledge, &c.) The *Unity* of God, I say, can no otherwise be demonstrated, than by considering *a priori* the Nature of a *necessary* or *self-existent* Cause. — That this supreme Author and Governour of this Nature, or of these Phænomena, is the

ⁱ See Bp. *Barlow*. Exercitat. VI. p. 283, &c. Bp. *Wilkins*. Nat. Relig. p. 117, &c.

^k “ It cannot but be evident, even to the *meanest* Capacity, upon careful Consideration, that he who *made* all things, as he could not but be *before* the things that he made, so it is not possible but he must be *present* also with the things that he made and governs. For things could not be *made* without the *actual Presence* of the Power that made them ; nor can things ever be *governed* with any Certainty, unless the Wisdom that governs them be *present* with them. Whatever Arguments therefore prove the *Being* of God, and his *unerring Providence*, must all be understood to prove equally likewise his *actual Omnipresence*.” *Clarke*. Posth. Sermons, Vol. I. Sermon. viii. p. 173.

“supreme Author and Governour of *universal Nature*, cannot be proved by us from our partial and imperfect Knowledge of a *few* Phænomena, in that *small Part* of the Universe which comes within the reach of our Senses, but must be demonstrated from the *intrinsic Nature* of *necessary Existence*.”¹ To all which I reply distinctly, as follows.

(1.) IT looks not well to make the *Unity* a Principle of *natural Religion*, and at the same time to declare that there is no Proof of it from *natural Reason*, excepting only this pretended Proof *a priori*; which, by the Confession of its greatest Advocates, is not *capable* of being understood but by a *few*, and those very *attentive Minds*, never to be made *obvious* to the *generality* of men;^m which moreover has been as *universally rejected* by the *Learned* who have thought of it, as it has been *totally unknown* to the *Vulgar* in all past Ages; and which, lastly, is not only an *inconclusive* Argument for the *Unity*, or for any thing else, but demonstrably *absurd*. If *Natural Religion* affords no other Argument of the *Unity* but this now mentioned, it is evident that the *Unity* is no Principle of it.

(2.) IT looks still worse to plead St. Paul's Authority in this Case, who if he thought of the *Unity* at all, in the Texts cited, or referred to, yet certainly had no view to this Argument *a priori*, as rendering the Heathen *inexcusable*. For how could they be *inexcusable* for not seeing what none but a *few*, and not without very *attentive Minds*, can see, what can never be *obvious* to the *generality*, what the wisest and most thoughtful Men have constantly

¹ Answer to a seventh Letter, p. 44.

^m Answer to a sixth Letter, p. 52.

Ch. II. rejected as *absurd*, and what plainly and inevitably is so? If St. Paul had any view at all to the Proofs of the *Unity* in that Place (which is questionableⁿ) it was to such only as may be drawn *a posteriori* (from the *few* Phenomena in our *System*, or from *Tradition*) which the *Plea* rejects as *no Proofs*.^o Therefore St. Paul's Authority is very improperly alledged to give shelter or countenance to the Argument *a priori*.

(3.) MEN may be very blameable for not admitting the *Unity*, tho' it be supposed that they have only *moral Presumption*, or *traditional Proofs* of it; because the *greater Probability* ought to determine their Judgment, and because it is unquestionable Matter of Duty, in *dubious Cases*, to take the *safer Side*. There was plain Reason for receiving and worshipping *one God*, while there was no apparent Reason at all for worshipping *ma-*

ⁿ See Dr. Gretton, p. 84.

^o But the learned Author elsewhere allows them to be *sufficient*, and so in effect has obviated or answer'd this Plea himself. His Words are :

"The plain Connexion of one thing upon another, thro' the whole material Universe, thro' all Parts of the Earth, and in the visible Heavens; the Disposition of the Air, and Sea, and Winds; the Motions of the Sun, Moon, and Stars; and the useful Vicissitudes of Seasons, for the regular Production of the various Fruits of the Earth; have always been *sufficient* to make it *evidently appear*, even to *mean Capacities* (had they not been perpetually *prejudiced* by wrong Instruction) that all things are under the Direction of *one Power*, under the Dominion of *one God*, to whom the whole Universe is uniformly subject. And in fact,—the *wisest* and *best* Men, in all *Heathen Nations*, have ever seen, and in good measure maintained, this great Truth.—But it is with *greater Clearness* from all appearance of Doubt, and with *greater assurance* of *Authority*, confirming the Dictate of Reason, that the *Scripture* sets forth to us this First Principle of Religion." Clarke. *Posth. Sermon*. Vol. I. Sermon. ii. p. 29, 30.



ny, but rather the contrary. Therefore the Hea- then were blameable in admitting a *Plurality*; and yet much more so for admitting *such* a *Plurality* as they did; which St. *Paul* chiefly alludes to, condemning their *Creature-Worship*^p as altogether *inexcusable*.

(4.) A DISTINCTION should have been made, as in some former Articles, between the different ways of arguing *a priori*. It is not amiss to argue for the *Unity* from the *Existence* and some one *Attribute* or *Attributes* (as *Omnipotence*, *Immensify*, *Independence*, &c.) before proved; nor should we scruple the Propriety of calling it an Argument *a priori*: But as to any arguing from *antecedent* Necessity, or from any *Ground*, *Cause*, or *Reason*, consider'd as *prior* to the *Existence* (which is the way of arguing now contended for) that is what we can never admit of. Such *antecedent* absolute *Necessity* carries no more Idea with it than antecedent absolute *Non-entity*; unless it means a *Cause* prior to the *First*, which is infinitely absurd.

(5.) ALLOWING that the *natural* Proofs of the *Unity* are probable only, not *demonstrative*, and that upon the foot of mere Reason it is a Tene- ment rather to be reckoned among the *pia credibilia*, than as a *demonstrated* Truth; this is saying no more than what several very wise and good Men have made no scruple to confess:^q And if such be really

^p Rom. i. 23, 24, 25. compare Gal. iv. 8.

^q The learned John Gerhard, and John Vossius cite Gabriel Biel to this purpose, adding their own Reflections upon what Biel had said.

Sed Biel (1. Sant. Dist. 2. Q. 10. Art. 3.) statuit quod tantum unum esse deum, sit creditum, & non-demonstratum ratione naturali nobis in via possibili. Id nos ita interpretamur; etiamsi ex natura libro rationes non contemnenda pro unitate divinæ essentia

Ch. II.

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really the Case, we are the more obliged to *Scripture* for *ascertaining* to us that great Truth, as well as for placing it in a clear and just Light. *Demonstrations* (strictly so called) are very good things where they are to be had : But when we cannot come at them, strong *Probabilities* may properly supply their Place. It is certain, that the Bulk of Mankind are not fitted for *Metaphysical* or *Mathematical Demonstrations* ; nor was it ever intended that *Moral* or *Theological* Matters should be govern'd by them. Blessed are they, who having neither had *ocular* nor other *Demonstration* ; but moral *Probabilities* only, have yet *believed*. Such Conduct is justly accounted rational in *Secular* Affairs of greatest Moment ; and it ought to be so accounted in *Religious* also. The Adversaries may have a crafty Design in requiring more than is *necessary*, and perhaps more than our *Faculties* can reach to ; and it may often be exposing a good Cause, and giving the common Enemies a needless Advantage, to enter the Lists with them upon such

essentia afferenda erui possint, eas tamen ad Fidei πληροφορίαν cordibus nostris ingenerandam, non satis efficaces esse. Ergo mens prius confirmanda est ex verbo dei, & illustribus testimoniis in quibus se deus generi humano patefecit : Postea utiliter potest addi consideratio philosophicarum demonstrationum. Gerhard. Loc. Comm. Tom. I. p. 106.

Dissentit Gabriel Biel, qui ante annos hosce 140 Tübingensē Gymnasio præfuit. Is censet probabiles magis rationes esse quam evidentes & certas. — Verum esto sane, ut solæ non sint ἀποδείξεις : At magnum iis pondus addit traditio vetus ; tum autem quod argumenta isthæc, si non prorsus ἀποδείξεις, saltem usque adeo probabilia sint, ut τῆς πειστικῆς Patroni nihil ullius momenti adferre valeant, cur plusquam unum statuere deum potius conveniat. Voss. De Idololatr. Lib. I. c. 2. p. 6.

Note : There were several other School-men, besides Biel, who would not allow that the Unity could be demonstrated : See them numbered up in Gillius. Lib. II. Tract. 3. cap. 7. p. 575.

unequal

unequal Terms. But this I hint by the way only, and pass on. Ch. II.

P L E A X.

“IF the First Cause exists absolutely without any *Ground* or *Reason* of Existence, it is altogether as possible, and as probable, and as reasonable to suppose, that there may, *without* any *Reason*, exist *numberless* finite independent co-existent First Causes — in different Parts of the immense Universe, as that there should, *without* any *Reason*, exist *one only*, infinite, immense, omnipresent First Cause, Author and Governour of the whole.” To which it may be replied :

(1.) THAT This amounts to saying, that unless there be a Cause *prior* to the *First* (for a *Reason a priori* means a *Cause*) there may as well be *numberless* First Causes as *one* : which is directly arguing, as usual, against the very name and notion of a *First Cause*. But tho’ a First Cause may or must be allowed to be *mysterious* and *incomprehensible*, yet it should not be thus constantly treated as an *impossible* or *contradictory* Idea. If there is any such thing as a *First Cause*, it must be *uncaused*, and can have no *Reason a priori* for it. Therefore to what purpose is it to dispute how many First Causes there might be, when if this way of Reasoning be just and conclusive, there could not not be so much as *one* ?

(2.) THE Question about the *number* of First Causes can never be determined by taking in *antecedent* Necessity ; because the same Difficulty will always recur, *toties quoties*, about the *number* of

Ch. II. antecedent Necessities. For if every one of them,  in the long Progression, has not *another* to fix and determine it, there will still be the like danger of *numberless* antecedent Necessities,^f or Reasons *a priori*, at every Remove higher, *in infinitum*.

(3.) SCRIPTURE has very plainly and fully determin'd the Question : And both *Tradition* and *Reason* are on the same side. For tho' there is not perhaps strict *Demonstration*, yet there are fair *Probabilities* (as before hinted) both in the *moral* and *metaphysical* way, well known to Divines ; and there is no colour of Reason for the contrary side. These are sufficient to build a *rational* Belief upon : And with these we ought to rest content.

P L E A XI.

“ To argue *a priori* concerning the Existence
 “ and Attributes of the First Cause is *no Absurdi-*
 “ *ty* : For, tho' no *Thing*, no *Being* can indeed
 “ be *prior* to the *First Cause*, yet Arguments may
 “ and must be drawn from the nature and conse-
 “ quences of that Necessity by which the First
 “ Cause exists. ”[†]

Ans. It is allowed, that Arguments may or must be drawn from the nature and consequences of *That Necessity by which the First Cause exists*, but not from the nature and consequences of *That Necessity by which the First Cause does not exist*. Now, the First Cause (if it be proper to say it exists by any Necessity) exists by a *modal*, not a *causal* Necessity ; by a *metaphysical* Necessity, not a *physical* ; by a Necessity *subsequent* in order of

^f See Gretton's Review, p. 90.

[†] Answer to the seventh Letter, p. 45.

Nature to the *Existence* (whereof it is the *Mode*) not by any *antecedent* Necessity. Therefore let us keep to the Idea of *modal* Necessity (meaning *Permanency, Stability, Non-contingency, Independency, Immutability*, and the like) I say, let us keep closely to that Idea of *modal* Necessity, without changing it into *causal*; and then, if any *Arguments* can be justly drawn from the Nature and *Consequences* of it, let them be admitted. But it is very certain and self-evident, that no *Arguments* can be drawn *a priori* to the *Existence*, from a *mode* of the same *Existence*, *subsequent* and *posterior*, in Conception, to it.

P L E A XII.

“ MATHEMATICAL *Necessary* Truths are
 “ usually demonstrated *a priori*, and yet nothing is
 “ prior to Truths eternally necessary. To confine
 “ therefore the use of the Term to Argumenta-
 “ tions about such things only as have other things
 “ prior to them in Time, is only quibbling about
 “ the signification of Words.”

Ans. No one goes about to *confine* the notion of *Priority* to *Priority* in Time only: It is allowed, that there is a *Priority* of *Order*, or of *Nature*, or of *Conception*, where there is no *Priority* in Time. But it is insisted upon, that there is nothing at all prior to the *Existence* of the *First Cause*, in any sense of *Priority* whatever; nothing prior to it so much as in *Conception*, or *order* of *Nature*; and therefore there is no arguing *a priori* at all in That Case. The insisting upon This is not quibbling about Words, but reasoning justly and soberly about Things, and Things of the greatest *Consequence*. The fundamental Doctrine of a *First Cause* is directly concern'd in it, and several other very important Articles hang upon it.

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(2.) As to mathematical *Necessary* Truths, they may be demonstrated *a priori*, as long as there is any other Truth *prior* in *Conception*, or order of Nature, to them : But when once we ascend up to *first* Principles or *Axioms*, which have no Truths *prior* in *Conception*, there is then no more arguing *a priori*, no ascending up *higher* in the Scale of Ideas, or in the Chain of Truths. * In like manner, as to *real* Existences there is a *First*, which is at the Top of that Scale ; and we can go no *higher* than to the *highest*. There all Reasoning *a priori* ceases, or ought to do so ; because there is no Existence *prior*, in order of Nature or of *Conception*, to argue from ; no possible *Causality*, no imaginable *Antecedency* to build such Reasoning upon. There all our Searches must terminate ; there our aspiring and wearied Thoughts take rest. And though an *uncaused* Being is an unfathomable Abyss, and we can scarce forbear asking childishly, *how* and *why*, or for *what Reason* it exists, and must exist ? yet our recollected Thoughts must tell us, that such Questions are improper and impertinent, and resolve only into a fond *Conception*, or contradictory notion of something still *higher* than the *highest*, and *prior* to the *first*.

P L E A XIII.

“ To the Objection, that an *Attribute* cannot
 “ be the *Ground* or *Reason* of the *existence* of the
 “ *Substance* itself (which is always, on the contra-
 “ ry, the *Support* of the *Attributes*) I answer, that
 “ in strictness of Speech *Necessity* of *Existence* is
 “ not an *Attribute* in the Sense that *Attributes* are
 “ properly so stiled ; but it is (*sui generis*) the

* See Dr. Gretton's Review, p. 95.

“Ground or Foundation of Existence both of the
“Substance and of all the Attributes.” *

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Ans. THE Sum of this evasive Plea is, that *Necessity* of Existence (since it is absurd to make an Attribute *antecedent*) must be a kind of *Attribute* which is no Attribute *properly* speaking ; an Attribute *sui generis*, a privileged Attribute, not subject to the ordinary Rules and Laws, to which all Attributes, *as such*, must be subject : A *Postulatum* too large, and too arbitrary to be granted by any Man that will not be content to take Sound for Sense, or Words and Syllables for Ideas. Either let this admired *Necessity* be called an *Attribute*, and acknowledged to be *subsequent* to its *Subject*, and then there is an End of the Argument *a priori* : Or if it must be *antecedent*, for the sake of the Argument, let it be called (what it is supposed confusely to be) a *Principle extrinsic*, and so it will import a *Cause* prior to the *First*. One of these Titles it must wear : For there is no breaking the Horns of the Dilemma ; that the said *Necessity* must either be *subsequent* as an Attribute ; or else a *Principle extrinsic*, if it be supposed *antecedent*. The Truth is, strictly speaking, *Necessity* in this case is not the Attribute, but *Necessary-Existence* is ; and the *Necessity* considered abstractedly, or by it self, is the *mode* of such Existence, expressing the *Manner* or *Perfection* of it. Now certainly, if every *Attribute*, in the very Notion of it, is *subsequent* to the *Substance* whereby it is *supported* ; a *Mode*, which is still one Remove farther off, and so much the more *subsequent*, in order of Nature and Conception, can never be look'd upon as *antecedent*, in any View whatever.

* Answer to seventh Letter, p. 46.

P L E A XIV.

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“THUS, in other Instances, *Immensify* is not an *Attribute* in the Sense that *Wisdom*, *Power*, and the like, are strictly so called, but it is (*sui generis*) a *Mode of Existence* both of the *Substance* and of *all the Attributes*. In like manner, *Eternity* is not an *Attribute* or *Property* in the Sense that other *Attributes*, inhering in the *Substance*, and supported by it, are properly so called, but it is (*sui generis*) the *Duration* of the *Existence* both of the *Substance* and of *all the Attributes*.”

(1.) THE Design of this Plea is to intimate, that *Attributes* may be distinguish'd into several kinds; which is not disputed. Nevertheless all *Attributes* agree in that which makes or denominates them to be *Attributes*; namely, in being *attributed* to some *Subject* considered as their *Support*, and of course *antecedent* in Conception to them.

(2.) AS to *Immensify* and *Eternity*, considered either as *Attributes* of the divine Being, or as *Modes* to other *Attributes*, they are under one Conception *subsequent* to the *Substance*, and under the other Conception *subsequent* both to the *Substance* and *Attributes*; that is to say, still *more subsequent*. And such also is the Case of *Necessity*, as abstracted from *Existence*, it is a *mode* of *Existence*, and so it is *doubly subsequent* under that Formality; which the Author himself seems to have been sensible of, and therefore was afraid of calling it a *mode* of *Existence*, tho' he allows it of the other Two.

P L E A

P L E A XV.

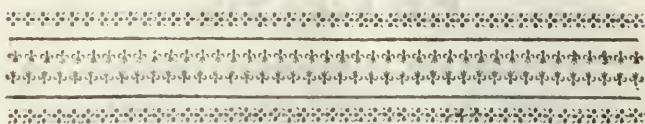
“ATTRIBUTES or Properties, strictly so called, cannot be predicated one of another : *Wisdom* cannot be properly said to be *powerful*, or *Power* to be *wise*. But *Immensities* is a *mode* of Existence both of the divine *Substance* and of all the *Attributes*. And *Necessity* is the *Ground*, or *Reason*, or *Foundation* of Existence both of the divine Substance, and of all the Attributes.”^y

Ch. II.

W

Ans^w. (1.) EXISTENCE being common to whatever is, no doubt but it may be predicated both of the *Substance* and the *Attributes* : And as *Necessity* in this Case is a *mode* of the Existence, and ought to have been called so as well as *Immensities*, and is predicated even of Existence, it must of course be predicated of every divine Attribute, because the *Existence* which it goes along with, and adheres to, is so predicated. But to infer from thence, that *Necessity*, a *mode* of Being, is a *Ground*, or *Reason*, or *Foundation* of Being, is jumping to a *Conclusion* without any *Premises* ; yea and *against* the *Premises* ; because a *mode* of Existence *presupposes* Existence. To be short, all those Words, *Ground*, *Reason*, *Foundation*, *internal Cause*, and the like, are only so much foreign Language, fetch'd from another Subject, and improperly brought in here : *Sounds* and *Syllables* only, if they do not mean a *Cause* prior to the *First* ; flat *Contradiction* and palpable *Absurdity*, if they do. But the Word *Necessity* seems to carry a kind of a Charm in it to deceive the Eye or to beguile the Fancy, while by a subtle sort of *Leger de main* it steals away the *true Idea* intrusted with it, and returns you a Counterfeit for it.

^y Answer to seventh Letter, p. 46.



C H A P. III.

Briefly intimating the hurtful Tendency of insisting so much upon the pretended Argument a priori, both with regard to RELIGION and SCIENCE.

Ch. III.  **I**T would not be worth the Time or the Pains, to confute any *false* Notion, were there no *harm* in it, or if it no way tended, directly or indirectly, to the Prejudice of the World. But whatever hurts *Religion* or *Science*, hurts the *Publick* of course ; and that these *new* Principles are of ill Tendency, in that respect, will appear from diverse Considerations, which come now to be mention'd.

I. IT may be of ill consequence to rest any *important* and unquestionable Truth upon *precarious* Principles, too weak to support it: It tends to *expose*, rather than to *serve* the Cause so pleaded ; to render it *suspected*, rather than to bring *Credit* to it ; and to give the Adversaries a handle for Ridicule or Triumph. One would not indeed altogether discourage any religious and well-meant Endeavours to strike *New-Light* into an important Subject, and to confirm establish'd Truths by additional Topicks, or supplemental Reinforcements. Were it not for the Attempts of that kind, made by lively and enterprising Geniusses, time after time, we should, no doubt, have wanted
many

many considerable Improvements both in *Philosophy* and *Theology*, which we rejoyce in at this Day : And were there not Scope given for Essays or Trials which may happen to fail (as all cannot hit) we should scarce have Field large enough for those that might be approved, and stand. Nevertheless in Truths which have already pass'd thro' an infinite number of Hands (such as is the *Existence* of a *Deity*) there is the less occasion for looking after *New* Topicks. Probably, there are no *new* ones now to be thought on, after the utmost stretch of human Faculties has been long exercised upon the Subject ; but those that appear *new* will be commonly found no other than old exploded Speculations. Thus it happen'd to *Des Cartes*, who seems to have valued himself for the inventing a *new* Argument for the *Existence* ; and He had several Admirers and Followers, for a time, of considerable Name and Figure, who closed in with it, conceiving it to be firm and solid. But within a while, it was suspected to be no better than a *Paralogism* ; and not only so, but was found to have been of *antient* Date too, as early as *Anselm*, and confuted afterwards by *Thomas Aquinas* ^a, and others, and at length dropp'd by all, because it had been weigh'd in the Balance, and proved wanting. So it will rarely happen, that any *new* Thought can be offered upon a Subject so trite, and well-nigh exhausted : Or, if there should be any *new* Topick invented, it will

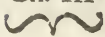
^a Vid. *Parker*. Disputat. de Deo. p. 567.

Conf. *Gillius*. Lib. I. Tract. 8. c. 3. p. 385, &c.

In *Gillius* may be seen a List of those School-men, who adhered to *Anselm* in That Argument ; as also a Recital of others who appeared against it, and confuted it.

Ch. III. probably be found much short in Value and Efficacy of the more common ones, which have been of long standing. The *commonest* Argument, in such cases, may be justly look'd upon as the *best*; because they have been proved and tried, and have survived many others of inferior Note, by reason of their known Weight and Significancy above the rest. *Opinionum commenta delet dies, naturæ judicia confirmat.* For the maintaining of Doctrines, which have been universally received in all Places and Times, there is more need of *Judgment* than *Invention*, in making choice of the *best* Proofs that had been before offered, rather than offering *new* ones; which will not come up to the other, but are likely to fail upon Trial, however they may please for a while by their *Novelty*. The more important a Cause is, the more need of Caution: Because there is a particular Reverence due to such a Cause, and the Risk is the greater, if it be made to lean on Quirk and Subtlety, upon weak and sandy Foundations. Now there cannot be a more important Cause than the Cause of *Theism*; neither can we any where more dangerously give a Loose to Fancy, than upon that Head.

2. It is still worse to rest such a Cause upon Principles, which are not only too *weak* to bear it, but which also in their obvious natural Tendency threaten to *overturn* it: Such is really the Case with respect to the Argument *a priori*; which is so far from establishing the *Existence* of a *First Cause* (the Point aim'd at) that it proceeds upon such Premises as admit no *First Cause* at all. The *Pleas* made for it directly strike at the very Notion of a *First Cause*, proving (if they proved any thing) that there can be no such thing as a Being *uncaused*. This has been observed over and over
in

in the preceding Chapter ; and so I need only refer back thither for the Proof of what I here say. Ch. III.  Such an Argument therefore, however piously intended, and offer'd with very upright Views, yet cannot but be look'd upon as an Argument of pernicious Tendency : And every true Lover of *Theism*, who perceives where such Reasoning terminates, cannot be too jealous of it. When *Des Cartes* propos'd a new Argument (as it was thought) for the Existence of a *Deity*, all the hurt of it was, that it fell short of the Point, and disserved the Cause, only by resting it upon what would not bear : But this other Argument, besides its being *inconclusive* for the Purpose aim'd at, is attended with this further Inconvenience, that it proceeds upon Principles, which run directly cross to it, and which make it impracticable to prove any *First Cause* at all. For if every Cause must have a Cause (which is the *Maxim* it sets out with, and proceeds upon all the way) the Consequence is inevitable, that there can be no *First Cause*. It is highly proper to declare against so pernicious a Maxim, which can tend only to *undermine* the Proofs of a *Deity*, instead of *improving* them.

3. THERE is another Circumstance in this matter which deserves Consideration, namely, that this pretended Demonstration is not only offered as a Proof, but is zealously insisted on, and highly magnified above the many solid and standing Demonstrations which have hitherto been received and approved by the *common Reason* of Mankind ; as if it were not sufficient to give us a *Paralogism* for *Demonstration*, but every other *Demonstration* (justly and properly so called) must be undervalued and slighted in comparison. For Instance, it is alledged that the Arguments *a posteriori* (tho' the

Ch. III.  best that we have) for the divine *Eternity* and *Omnipresence* are short of *Proof* : Which is not *true*, even in the strictest Sense of *demonstrative Proof* : And if it were true, yet so long as there is other *sufficient Proof* (such as every reasonable Man must readily acquiesce in) it should not be slightly spoken of ; neither should it be suggested that those Attributes *cannot be proved*. The *moral Proofs*, after all, if not so strictly *demonstrative* as the *metaphysical*, are yet better suited to common Capacities, and apter to persuade the Bulk of Mankind ; ^b and are therefore of more extensive *Use*, and consequently of more intrinsic *Value* than the other. However that be, it is certainly of ill Consequence to *depreciate* the solidest Arguments hitherto urged in Proof of the *Existence*, for the sake only of *magnifying* a Flight of Fancy. When an *imaginary Proof* is thus advanced as a *real* one, and not only so, but *superior* to all others, it then becomes more and more *dangerous*, as doing great Disservice to the Cause of God and Religion. ^c

4. I

^b “ The Proof *a posteriori* is level to all Mens Capacities : because there is an endless *gradation* of *wise* and *useful* Phænomena of Nature, from the most *obvious*, to the most *abstruse* ; which afford (at least a *moral* and *reasonable*) Proof of the Being of God, to the several Capacities of all unprejudiced Men, who have any Probity of Mind. And this is what, I suppose, God expects (as a *moral Governour*) that moral Agents should be determined by. ” *Answer to sixth Letter*, pag. 51, 32.

“ The Proof *a priori* is — capable of being understood by only a *few attentive Minds* ; because it is of use only against *learned* and *metaphysical Difficulties*. ” *ibid*.

^c What Mr. Locke says, in relation to another sophistical Argument for the *Existence*, once contended for by the *Cartesians*, is very applicable in this Case :

“ It

4. I MUST farther remark, that this Argument *a priori*, or some Appendages of it, look not very favourably towards *Revealed Religion*, particularly as to the Article of the *Trinity*; as hath been observed at large by a learned Hand,^d and need not here be repeated. This is an additional Evidence of the *mischievous* Tendency of those false *Metaphysicks*, which as they do in one view sap the first and fundamental Article of *natural Religion*, by destroying the Notion of a *First Cause*; so do they, in another view, strike at some of the prime Fundamentals of the Gospel.

5. ADD to this, the Mischief done to *true Philosophy*, by adopting one *absurd Principle*, which may probably draw after it many other, (as one Error leads to more) or may introduce a fallacious way of Reasoning, such as may affect *Science* in general. For example: In order to maintain *antecedent Necessity*, the Ideas of *Infinity* and *Eternity* are fetch'd in as *antecedently* forcing themselves upon us;^e and it is supposed to be *intuitively* evi-

“ It is an ill way of establishing this Truth, and silencing
 “ *Atheists*, to lay the whole stress of so important a Point upon
 “ that sole Foundation ——— and out of an over-fondness of
 “ that Darling Invention cashier, or at least endeavour to inva-
 “ lidate, all other Arguments, and forbid us to hearken to those
 “ Proofs, as being weak or fallacious, which our *own Existence*
 “ and the *sensible Parts* of the Universe offer so clearly and co-
 “ gently to our Thoughts, that I deem it impossible for a con-
 “ sidering Man to withstand them. *Locke. Hum. Underst. B. IV.*
 C. 10. S. 7. Letter 1. to *Stillingfleet*, p. 112.

^d Dr. Gretton's Preface to his Review, p. 5, 6, &c.

^e Demonstration, p. 15.

Ch. III. dent,^f that those *Ideas* have their objective Realities *ad extra*. Then *Space* and *Time* are advanced, as amounting to the same with *Infinity* and *Eternity*, and are supposed really to exist *ad extra*, and as *certainly* as that *twice two* makes *four*: Whereupon they are exalted into *Modes*, or *Attributes*, or *Properties* of the *divine Substance*,^g and God himself is imagined to be the *Substratum* of both.^h Besides all which, the Idea of a *necessarily-existing* Being is made to be the Idea of a Being, the Supposition of whose not existing is an *express Contradiction*: And *Necessity* is interpreted a *plain Impossibility*, or *implying a Contradiction*, to suppose the contrary, like the Relation of Equality between *twice two* and *four*.ⁱ Nay it is further said: “If
 “ I have in my mind an Idea of a Thing, and can-
 “ not possibly in *my Imagination* take away the
 “ Idea of That Thing as actually existing, any
 “ more than I can change or take away the Idea
 “ of the Equality of *twice two* to *four*, the Cer-
 “ tainty of the *existence* of that Thing is the same,
 “ and stands on the same Foundation as the Cer-
 “ tainty of the other Relation.”^k It is said further, “That *absolute Necessity* (that is, *antecedent*)
 “ is the Cause of the unalterable Proportion be-
 “ tween *twice two* and *four*.”^l Now it is more than probable, that this whole train of Suppositions, or Assertions, brought in as part of the Retinue to

^f Demonstration. *ibid.* Letters, p. 34.

^g Demonstration. *ibid.* Letters, p. 15, 16, 20, 35.

^h Letters, p. 20, 24.

ⁱ Demonstration. p. 16, 18, 19.

^k Demonstration. p. 20.

^l Letters, p. 33.



wait upon the *Argument a priori*, is little else but a train of Error and false Reasoning. It would be tedious to enter into a large Examination of every Particular, but I shall make a few Strictures upon each.

(1.) As to the Ideas of *Infinity* and *Eternity*, considered as *antecedently* forcing themselves upon us, there is no Truth in it, if it means forcing themselves upon our *Reason*, and extorting *Assent*. Perhaps they may in some sense force themselves upon the *Imagination* (like many other Fancies, or waking Dreams) but as to *believing* that the Ideas of *Infinity* and *Eternity* have objective Realities *ad extra*, we are not forced to it, *antecedently* or otherwise, 'till *rational* Conviction shall render us *certain* of it.

(2.) As to the Ideas of *Space* and *Time*, they are not the same Ideas with those of *Immensify* and *Eternity*, but are constantly thought of and spoken of in a very different manner. *Immensify* and *Eternity* are considered as *Attributes* of something, and spoken of accordingly: Whereas *Space* and *Time* are conceived and spoken after the manner of *Substances*; as several other abstract general Ideas (*Nature*, *Fortune*, *Death*, &c.) are. *Immensify* is an improper Expression, is Blunder and Solecism: But *immense Space* carries no Impropriety in the Expression; which shews that the Ideas are *different*. So again, *eternal Eternity* is mere Solecism: But *Time eternal* (in the large Sense of *Time*) is a proper Expression. *Space* and *Time* are considered not as being themselves *Properties*, but as being invested with *Properties*: that is, they are considered after the manner of *Substances*, as many other abstract Ideas are. And because it is
certain,

Ch. III. certain, that they are not *Substances* (much less can they be *Attributes*) they are, most probably, nothing else but general abstract Ideas, *common Measures* and *Receptacles* formed by the Mind, for the better Lodgment, Rangement, and Adjustment of our other Ideas.

(3.) As to Existence *ad extra*, it is not to be proved by strength of *Imagination*, but by *Reasons* proper to the Case. So it cannot be justly pretended, that we have *intuitive* Evidence. We know and feel our own Existence, and from thence can *demonstrate* the Existence of God. I say, *demonstrate* : For our Knowledge of God here is *demonstrative* only, not *intuitive*, as will be shewn hereafter. We neither *see* nor *feel* Space or Time as existing *ad extra* : We contemplate nothing but our own *Ideas* : And from Ideas *within*, to Realities *without*, there is no immediate Consequence to be drawn ; but whatever we may draw, justly, must be work'd out by Deduction and Inference, and perhaps a long chain of Reasoning, before we can come at *Certainty* as to real *external* Existence.

(4.) To pretend, that our *Ideas within* are as necessarily connected with *actual* Existence *without*, as the Ideas of *twice two* and *four*, is mistaking *Imagination* for *Reason*, and *Association* of Ideas for *Connexion*. That *twice two* is equal to *four*, is as certain as that *the same Idea is the same Idea* : And the *Connexion* of the Idea of *Equality* is plain and certain. This is only pronouncing upon the Relations of *Ideas* with each other, and so far we cannot be mistaken, having a *clear* and *distinct* Perception of such Relations : But *ideal Existence* is not necessarily connected with *real Existence*,
like

like as *Idea* with *Idea* ; and therefore the Comparison here made is wide and foreign. There is no Resemblance between the two Cases, but they are as different as possible from each other, as much as *Fancy* and *Fiction* from *Truth* and *Reason*.

(5.) To make God the *Substratum* of Space and Time (which really are not *Attributes* or *Properties*, nor ever spoken of as such) is mere *Solecism* and *Impropriety* of Expression ; a certain Mark of as great an Error in Thought. Not to mention many other just Objections which lie against the gross Notion of an *extended* or *expanded* Deity.

(6.) *NECESSARY-EXISTENCE* is inaccurately and preposterously explain'd by *Impossibility of Non-existence* : For the *Affirmative* is in order of Nature *prior* to the *Negative* ; ^m and, strictly speaking, the Existence is not *necessary*, because Non-existence is *impossible* ; but on the reverse, Non-existence is impossible, because Existence, in that Instance, is *necessary*, or infinitely *permanent*. ⁿ The *Negative* Truth in this case resolves

^m At vero *necessitas* describi vel intelligi haudquaquam potest absque ratione ipsius *esse* : nam *necessarium* est, quod non potest non *esse*. Quare ipsum *esse* prius est ratione *necessitatis*. Gillius. Lib. I. Tract. 8. c. 4. p. 396.

ⁿ *Necessarium* nequaquam recte per *possibile*, nec per *impossibile* definitur ; nihil enim recte definitur per aliquid *posterius* eo, sicut 2^{do} *Post.* & 7^{mo} *Metaph.* demonstratur ; sed utrumque istorum est *posterius* *necessario*. Non ergo recte definitur *necessarium* per hoc quod non est *possibile* non *esse*, vel per hoc quod *impossibile* est non *esse*. Ideoque *Avicen.* 1. *Metaph.* 5. reprobatur definitiones Antiquorum de *necessario*, *possibili*, & *impossibili*, eo quod definiebant illa per se invicem *circulando* ; ut patet de definitionibus quas ibi recitat.

Ch. III. solves into its correspondent *Affirmative*, as into its *Principle*, from which it is deduced.

(7.) IN the making the Idea of a *necessarily-existing* Being to be the Idea of one whose *Non-existence* is an *express Contradiction*, there appears to be a two-fold Confusion ; one between *Physical* and *Logical* Necessity ; another between a Contradiction *a priori* and a Contradiction *a posteriori*. There is in a *necessarily-existing* Being a *Physical* Impossibility of Non-existence : Which is not the same thing with a *Logical* Repugnancy, referring to our *Ideas* as *contradictory* and *repugnant*. Those two Things are distinct, and ought not to have been confounded.°

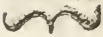
A CONTRADICTION *a priori* is, when we perceive from the Idea of such a *Cause*, that it is a Contradiction for that Cause not to produce such an Effect. There is no such Contradiction as This comes to, in the Supposition of the Non-existence of a Deity : For we see not *a priori* why He must be ; we see no *Cause* of it ; but, on the contrary, we perceive, that He is absolutely *uncaused*.

BUT *a posteriori* we find it resolve at length into a *Contradiction*, to suppose that no *First Cause* exists : It is a Contradiction to our Ideas of *Cause*

recitat ab Antiquis, dicitque id quod ex his tribus dignius est intelligi, est *necesse esse* ; quoniam *necesse esse* significat vehementiam essendi, *esse* vero notius est quam *non esse* : *esse* enim cognoscitur per se, *non esse* vero per *esse*. Bradwardine. De *Causa Dei*. p. 204.

° See Dr. Gretton upon the Distinction between *Logical* and *Physical* Reason. *Review*. p. 69.

and

and *Effect* : For *Effects* must have a *Cause*, and Ch. III.
if something now exists, something always existed, 
something *independent* ; for from *Nothing* could arise *Nothing*. This kind of Contradiction *a posteriori* we admit ; not the other *a priori*, which is *Fiction* only, tho' much has been built upon it.

(8.) As to absolute (antecedent) *Necessity's* being the Cause of the unalterable Proportion between twice *Two* and *Four*, it is all a Mistake. There is no *Antecedency* in the Case. *First* Principles and Axioms shine by their own Light, have nothing *antecedent* to demonstrate them by, are perceived by *Intuition*, not *Demonstration* ; and resolve only into this, that *every thing is what it is, or the same Idea is the same Idea*. The Idea of *Equality* is the Idea of *Equality*, and the Idea of *twice two* is the Idea of *twice two*, and the Idea of *four* the Idea of *four* : And, as soon as ever the *Terms* expressing those Ideas are understood, the Proposition is admitted of course, requiring no *antecedent* *Necessity* to ascertain it, no *Cause* to fix it : It is above all *Causes*, being *intuitively*, not *demonstrably* discern'd. But enough has been said to shew how the erroneous notion of the Argument *a priori* has served to usher in a great deal of Confusion and false Reasoning in other Articles hanging upon it, or ministring to it : So that the letting in that one false Principle cannot but tend to the detriment of *Science* in general, which I undertook to shew.

AND now, to look back to what has been observed in these Papers concerning the pretended *Demonstration a priori*, the Sum is as follows : That the Thought is in some sense *Old* enough, having been suggested, considered, and rejected by

Ch. III. the Judicious fifteen hundred Years ago : That it has been frequently taken notice of since by the School-men and others ; and drawn out into publick Light, but always like a *Criminal*, in order to be *condemn'd* : That tho' Attempts have been made in favour of something under the *Name* of an Argument *a priori*, yet as to the gross Sense of it, in which it is now contended for (*viz.* as an *antecedent* Ground, Reason, Foundation, internal Cause of the Deity) it appears not to have met with any professed Patrons before the eighteenth Century ; when probably what former Ages had been doing was not remembered, or not duly attended to : That the new Countenance given to a Notion that had been so long and universally exploded, brought it into some degree of Credit and Repute, before it was understood : That as soon as it came to be more minutely look'd into, it began presently to decline, and to sink as it formerly us'd to do : That it is now found to carry in it such insuperable Absurdities, as must of course be a Bar to its Reception in an inquisitive and discerning Age : That, lastly, it seems to promise no Good to *Religion* or *Science*, while sapping the fundamental Articles of one, and crossing the established Principles of the other.

THIS appears to me to be a *true* Report, and *fair* Account of what concerns the Argument *a priori*, after the most attentive and impartial Enquiries I have hitherto been able to make into it.

Nov 1707

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